



"THE BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR."

NEW YORK POST

"Terrific."

GARY OLDMAN DELIVERS A VIRTUOSO PERFORMANCE.
AMANDA SEYFRIED IS SUBLIME."

GOOD MORNING AMERICA

"A Movie Made with Love."

TIME

"★★★★★. AMONGST DAVID FINCHER'S BEST."

EMPIRE

"★★★★★"

THE GUARDIAN

Mank

IN SELECT THEATERS AND ON

NETFLIX



VISIT...

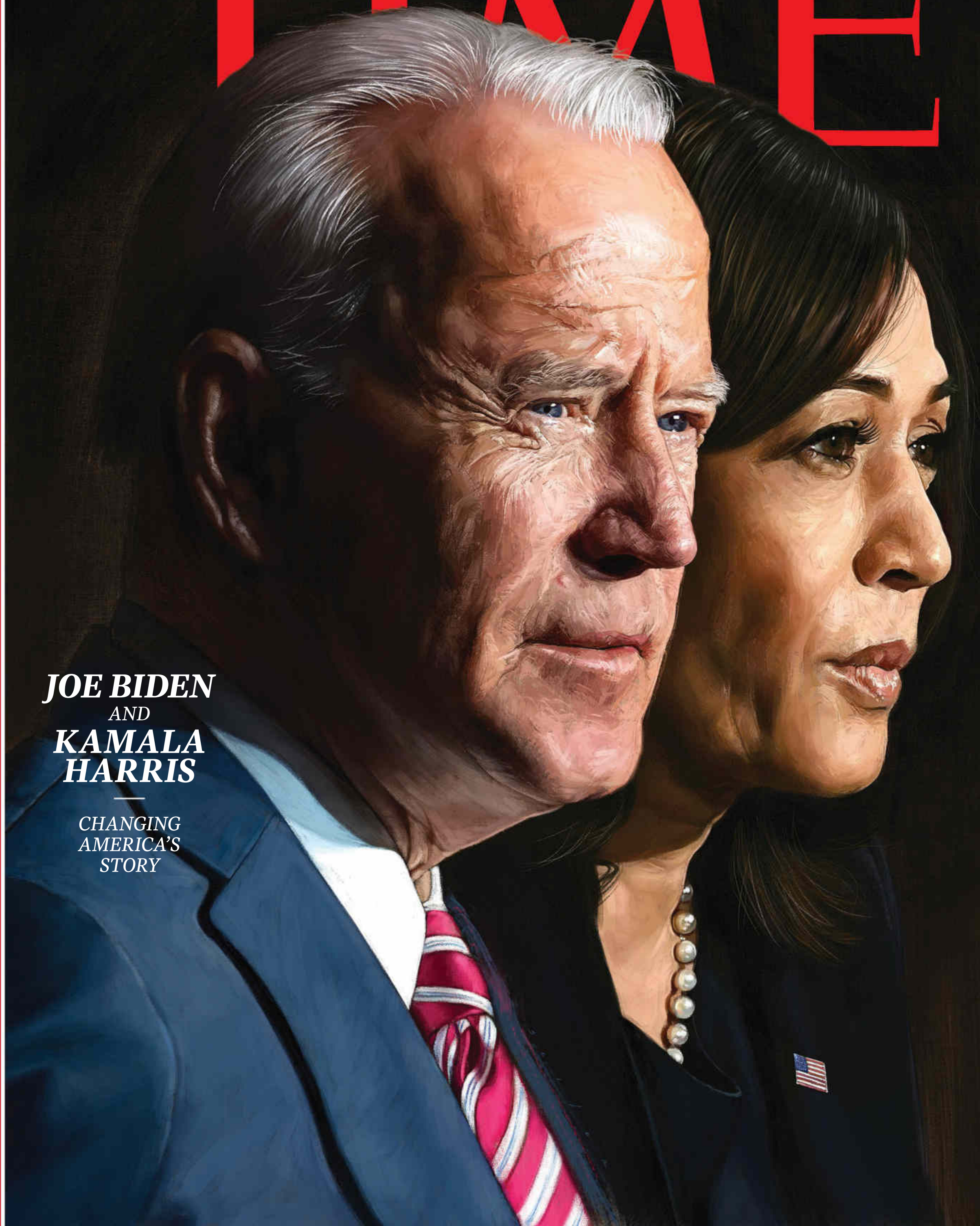
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PERSON *of the* YEAR

TIME

JOE BIDEN
AND
**KAMALA
HARRIS**

—
CHANGING
AMERICA'S
STORY



TIME

BUSINESSPERSON OF THE YEAR

*Eric Yuan and the
Zoom Revolution*

Erica Diederich

Stephen Lin

herta rudi

Maera Hagage

paul desilva

racquel colby

Aundaray Guess

Justin

Steve LeVine

randallklitz

emilymckinleyhill

renee

JulieJoy

KPE

Eric Yuan

Sofia Lechner

Francisco Liz

User 895

michelle star

chrisschortgen

kathleenkuhn

christopher Chan

lisagonzalez

larry

Sherry Cole

milo

vishsingh

Priya

brona

Michael Antwi

robin river

Robert Hickerson

malcolm nicholson

Yasue Matsubayashi

aarondallavilla

wannetta worthy

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Security Participants

Chat

Share Screen

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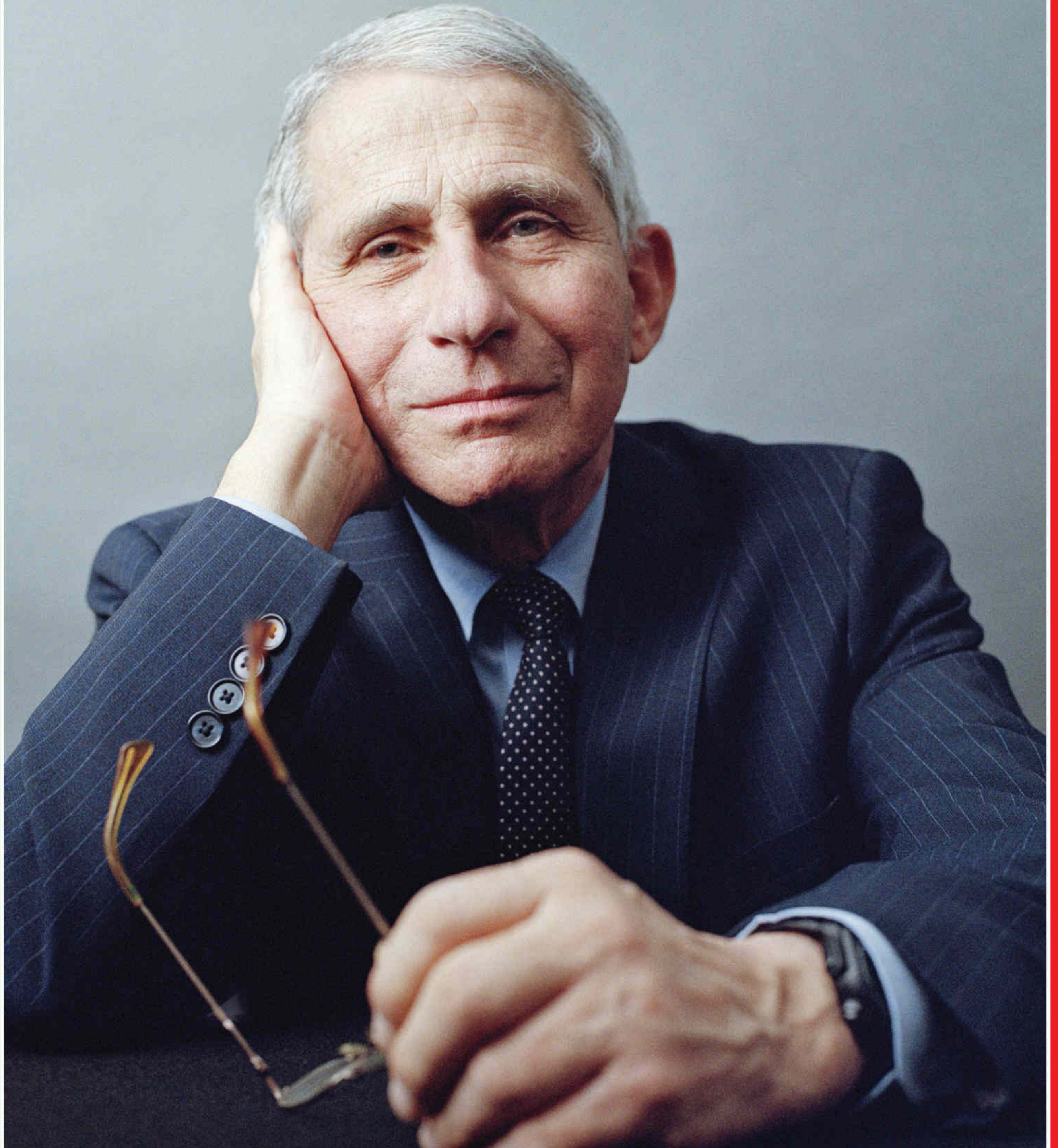
Reactions

End

TIME

GUARDIAN OF THE YEAR

Dr. Anthony Fauci



TIME

GUARDIAN OF THE YEAR

Frontline Health Workers

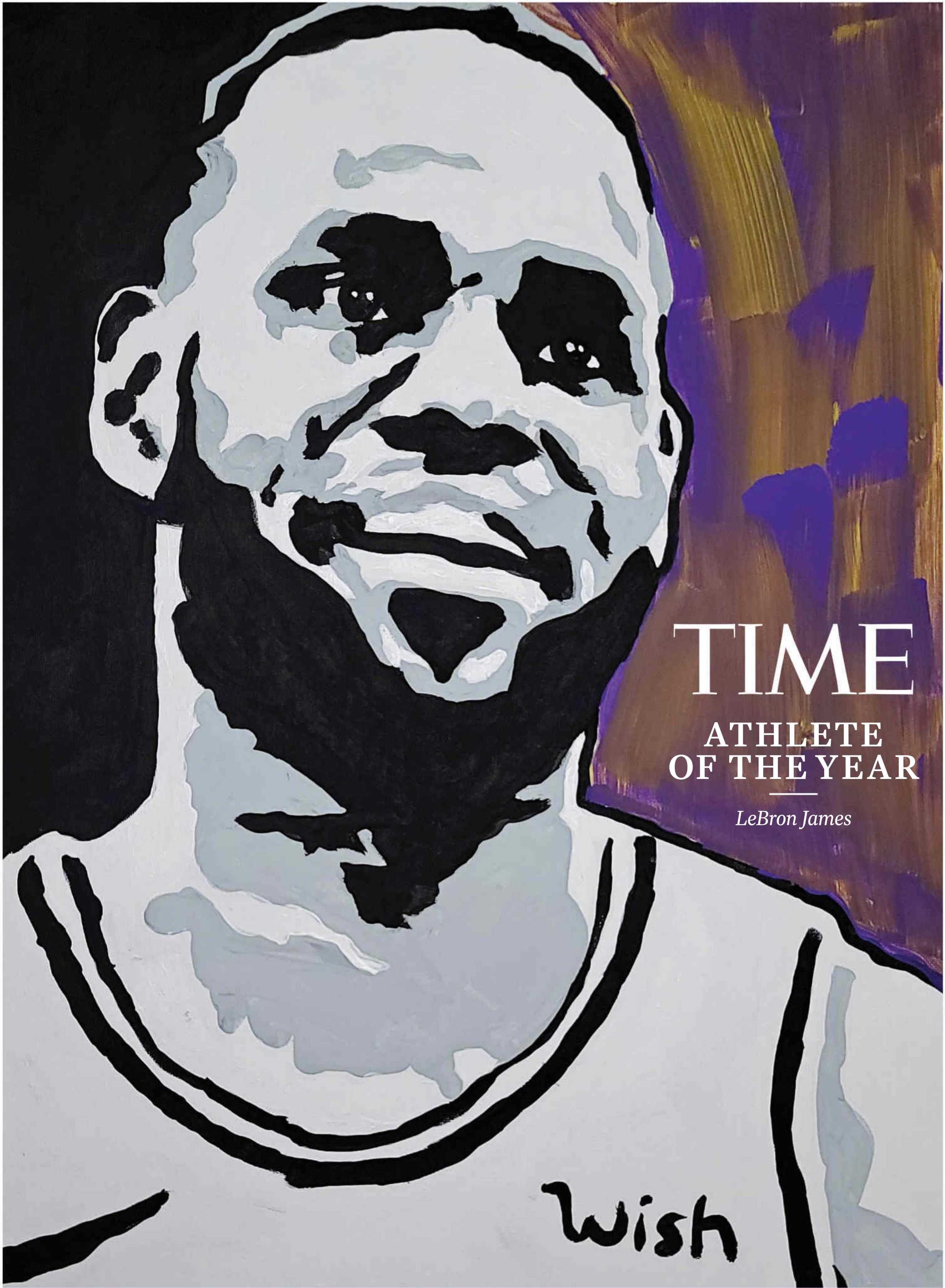


TIME

GUARDIAN OF THE YEAR

*Porche Bennett-Bey
and the
Fight for Racial Justice*





TIME

ATHLETE
OF THE YEAR

LeBron James

Wish

TIME

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

BTS



THE MIDNIGHT

SCREENPLAY BY MARK L. SMITH DIRECTED BY GEORGE CLOONEY

PG-13
SOME BLOODY
IMAGES AND
BRIEF STRONG
LANGUAGE

H O P E F I N D S A W A Y

ACADEMY AWARD® WINNER

GEORGE CLOONEY

IGHT SKY



NOW PLAYING IN SELECT THEATERS AND ON

NETFLIX | DECEMBER 23



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GUARDIANS OF THE YEAR

The good fights of Dr. Anthony Fauci,
frontline health workers
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By Alice Park • Jeffrey Kluger • Justin Worland

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On his way to yet another
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By Raisa Bruner

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Guardians of the Year
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Photograph by Jody Rogac for TIME

Frontline Health Workers
Illustration by Tim O'Brien for TIME

Assa Traoré
Photograph by Kenny Germé—Total Management

Porche Bennett-Bey
Portrait by Bisa Butler for TIME

Entertainer of the Year
BTS Photograph by Mok Jung Wook for TIME

Athlete of the Year
LeBron James Portrait by Tyler Gordon for TIME

Businessperson of the Year
Eric Yuan TIME Photo-illustration; Yuan: Zoom



WORLDTIMER GMT

Since 1848, OMEGA has timed historic events and human achievements around the world. The Worldtimer embodies that pioneering spirit with a dial that provides an accurate view of the world's time zones with just a glance. Continuing that commitment, today's Master Chronometer models are tested and certified at the highest level by the Swiss Federal Institute of Metrology (METAS). This guarantees more accuracy, reliability and supreme resistance to magnetism from electronic devices, such as phones and laptops, ensuring the Worldtimer is always adventure-ready.


OMEGA

This is for all of those who
The ones who
The ones who
Who invent, create and

embrace change.
refuse to give in.
keep pushing.
won't stop until their ideas come to life.

This is for all of those who

believe that the future isn't something you wait for.
That it's a chance.
A challenge.
An inspiration.

This is for all those who
Who refuse to wait

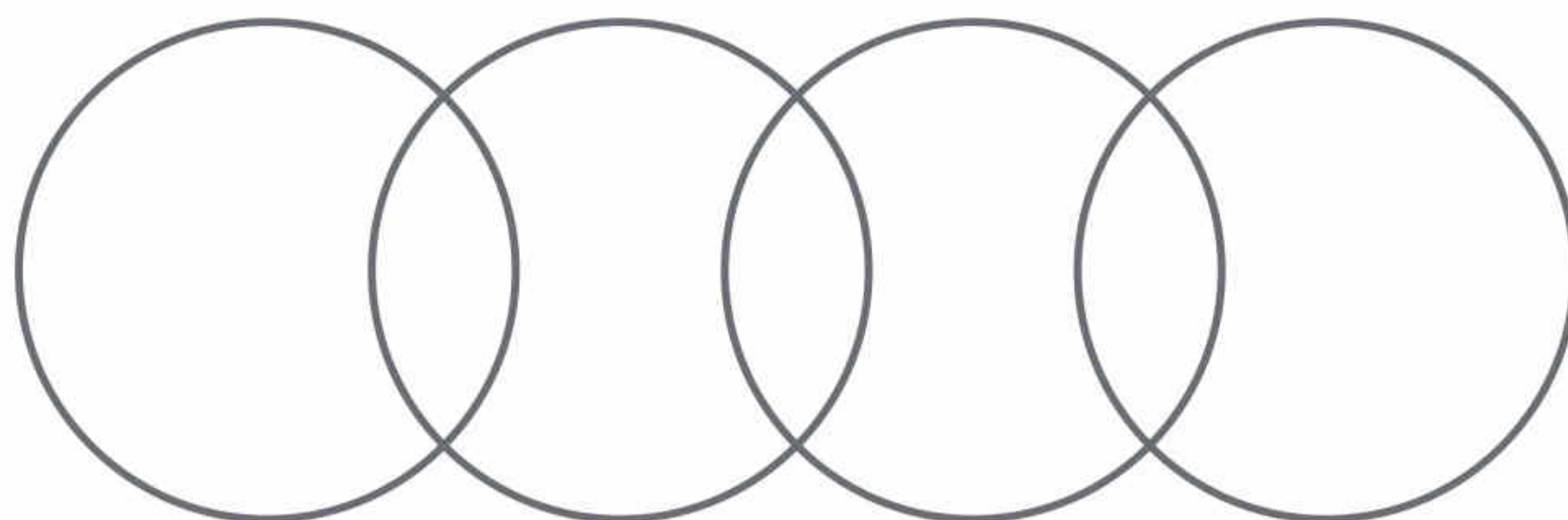
start the future today.
for a better tomorrow.

Instead, they get to work.

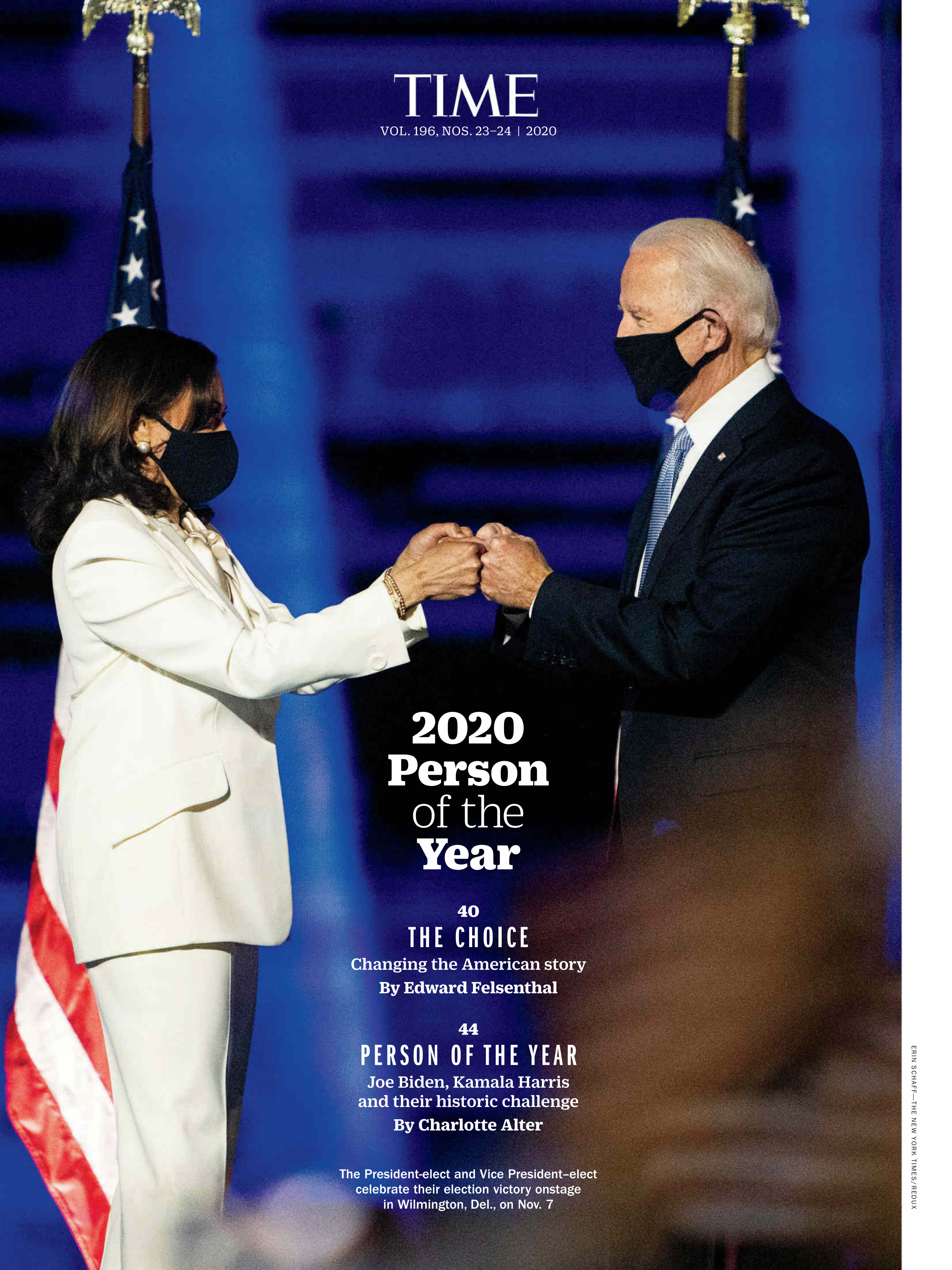
They
And make things

harvest the sun, the water and the wind.
without breaking others.

Because nothing is more sustainable than doing
all the good we can do.



Future Is An Attitude

A photograph of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris on a stage. They are both wearing black face masks and are fist-bumping. Kamala Harris is on the left, wearing a white suit. Joe Biden is on the right, wearing a dark suit and a blue tie. In the background, there are American flags and a blue backdrop.

TIME

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2020 Person of the Year

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THE CHOICE

Changing the American story

By Edward Felsenthal

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PERSON OF THE YEAR

Joe Biden, Kamala Harris
and their historic challenge

By Charlotte Alter

The President-elect and Vice President-elect
celebrate their election victory onstage
in Wilmington, Del., on Nov. 7

thank you *Kristin*

“for being the kindest stranger
while we were in the hospital.”

While on vacation in Florida, Andrew and Suzanne found themselves facing unforeseen challenges. Kristin, a driver, turned out to be an unexpected source of support. Andrew shares their story.

“Suzanne was just about halfway through her pregnancy when her water broke.”

She and Andrew had to stay in the hospital for 10 weeks. The couple was stranded away from home, without a support system.

“I ordered a ride with Uber to go to a laundromat to get some clothes cleaned. Kristin was my driver.”

On the way, Andrew told Kristin his story. After being dropped off, he thought nothing more of it.

“About 20 minutes later, she showed back up at the laundromat. She had gone to the grocery store and bought us bags full of snacks, toiletries, and other essentials for hospital living.”

And that was just the start. Over the next 10 weeks, Kristin kept bringing them much-needed supplies and treats. Although the couple’s baby is fine, it was a tough time for them – and Kristin’s kindness helped them get through it.

“I think Kristin is just the most uncommonly kind and generous person I have ever encountered in my life.”

Behind the Scenes

IN THE FALL OF ANY NORMAL YEAR, WE PACK a conference room at TIME's headquarters in New York City with reporters, producers and editors to debate who should be selected as Person of the Year, one of the most-watched franchises in journalism, one that has endured world wars and depressions, periods of conflict and years of peace—and now a global pandemic.

This year, we held the meeting from our homes in cities around the world. Like so many of you, we've been working remotely and collaborating virtually. We met one another's families and pets as they popped into the camera; shared joys, concerns and anxieties; cared for and sometimes lost loved ones to this terrible disease.

Some things did stay the same. As we've done for the past 93 years, different teams of journalists were launched on parallel projects for Person of the Year, without knowing who or what the ultimate choice would be. This year—as in 2016, when Donald Trump became Person of the Year following his victory—offered the additional dimension of a U.S. presidential election concluding around the time we normally start to lock in decisions.

Collaboration is a hallmark of our team, and it is not overstatement to say that nearly everyone at TIME touched this project. The many pieces were overseen by executive editor Ben Goldberger, joined by an editorial committee that included Naina Bajekal, Lori Fradkin, Mahita Gajanan and Victor Williams. They kept everything together at a time when we were all kept apart. "There was a special resonance to this year's project," says Ben, "because we were living so many of these stories as we were telling them."

AS THE WORLD TRANSFORMED in 2020, so did we. One of the great privileges of working here is the opportunity to be in conversation with TIME's history—and to build on it. As the nation celebrated the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, we introduced Women of the Year, a multimedia effort recognizing a century's worth of women who belong among Person of the Year's historic company. We also introduced our first Kid of the Year, working with our colleagues at TIME for Kids and with Nickelodeon to spotlight remarkable children across the U.S. One of those kids, 14-year-old artist Tyler Gordon, painted the portrait of LeBron James, TIME's 2020 Athlete of the Year, on one of the covers of this issue.

In our second year after becoming an

independent company, under the ownership of Marc and Lynne Benioff, we found new ways to connect with our audiences, such as our TIME100 Talks virtual events, and new technologies like Zoom, created by the 2020 Businessperson of the Year Eric Yuan, that enabled our work. We launched a TIME for Kids digital-subscription product; prime-time broadcast specials on ABC, Nickelodeon/CBS and NBC; and a variety of new newsletters, which together now reach more than 1.4 million subscribers. We also built new offerings in health and personal finance.

Early in the year, we brought Martin Luther King Jr. into virtual reality. That project, a first-of-its-kind re-creation of the March on Washington, served as a reminder of King's unfinished work. The urgency of that work became even clearer this summer, as calls to end systemic racism reverberated around the world. This issue tells that story, in part, through our 2020 Guardians of the Year: racial-justice organizers like Assa Traoré in Paris and Porche Bennett-Bey in Kenosha, Wis.

Like many companies, TIME has been grappling with what equality means in our own workplace. We've committed to our audiences and to our team to do more to amplify underrepresented voices in our coverage and to support Black employees and staff members from marginalized groups in our newsroom and our company. We are working to make TIME an equitable, diverse and inclusive organization. As I wrote earlier this year, we know that will make TIME stronger.



The Choice
Portrait by
Jason Seiler
for TIME

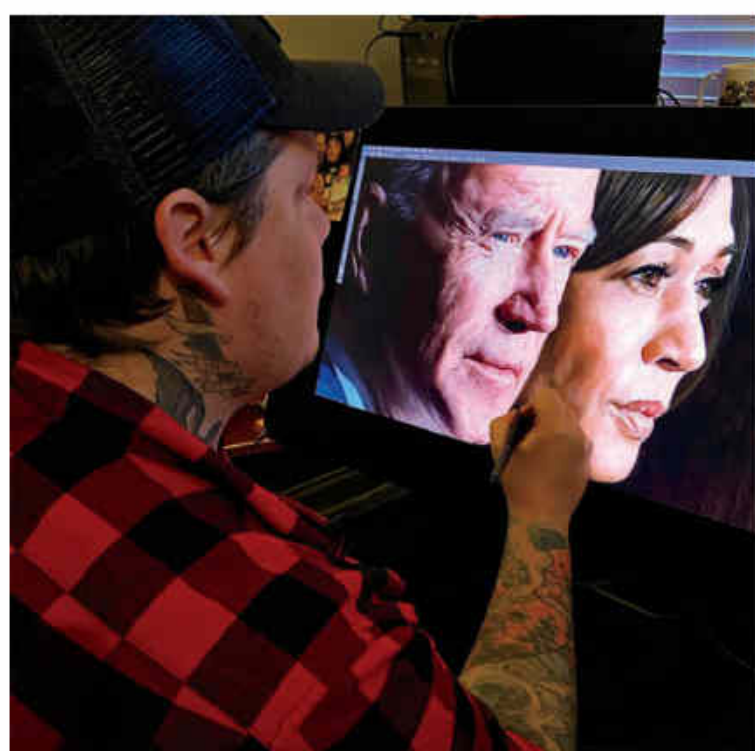
ON DEC. 7, I traveled with Washington bureau chief Massimo Calabresi, senior correspondent Charlotte Alter, photo director Katherine Pomerantz, executive producer Jonathan Woods and others to meet with President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris at the Queen Theater in Wilmington, Del. We talked with them about the challenges of conducting a transition in the pandemic and about those ahead. From our distance of 16 ft., I asked Biden how much remote work and other aspects of our pandemic lives would continue once it was over. "I think we're going to get back to the ability to embrace one another," he said. "I think that's important." At one point, Biden stopped the proceedings to do that virtually by FaceTiming with the parents of our photographer Camila Falquez.

The selection of Person of the Year is rarely easy, and this year was far more difficult than most. Predictions can make fools of all of us, but it seems safe to say that historians will look at 2020 as a crucial turning point on many fronts. In Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, we have two individuals whose election mirrored and moved the major stories of this year and whose fates will shape the nation's role in the world and the future of the American experiment.

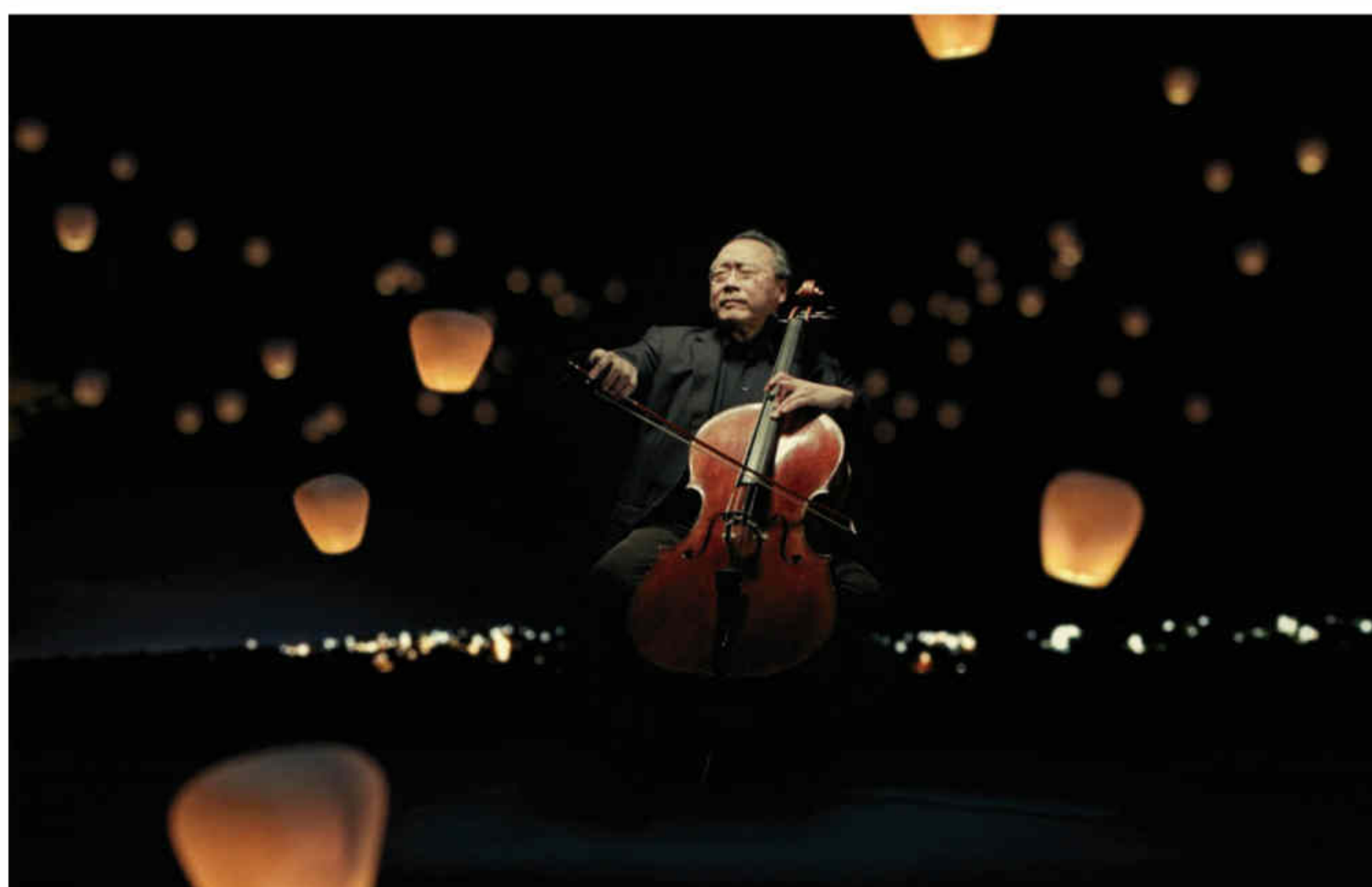
Edward Felsenthal,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & CEO
@EFELSENTHAL



Left: A virtual Person of the Year planning meeting



Making the TIME covers, above from left: Jason Seiler paints the Biden-Harris portrait; Bisa Butler with her quilted-fabric portrait of organizer Porche Bennett-Bey; Kid of the Year finalist Tyler Gordon, 14, with his painting of LeBron James; Tim O'Brien paints frontline health workers



Right: Cellist Yo-Yo Ma performs during the Dec. 10 NBC broadcast reveal of Person of the Year

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a person's face, focusing on the right eye and the texture of their skin. The lighting is dramatic, with deep shadows and bright highlights on the skin and the eye. The person's expression is serious and contemplative.

**WHERE ARE WE
TO GO?**

**HOW ARE WE
TO RESPOND
WHEN WE
ARE SHOWN**

OVER AND OVER AND OVER

**THAT OUR LIVES
DO NOT
MATTER?**

OUR LIVES MATTER.

**BEING WHITE IN AMERICA
IS NOT NEEDING TO STATE YOUR LIFE MATTERS.**

**AND WHEN YOUR LIFE MATTERS,
YOU HAVE POWER.**

NOW IS THE TIME TO USE IT.

**NOT BEING RACIST IS NOT ENOUGH.
NOW IS THE TIME TO BE ANTI-RACIST.**

READ. LISTEN. DONATE. PLAN. MARCH. VOTE. SPEAK OUT. STEP IN. STEP UP.

**HOW YOU USE YOUR POWER
IS A CHOICE.**

START HERE. PG.COM/TAKEONRACE





Green shoots

**2019 PERSON OF THE YEAR GRETA THUNBERG
PLANTS SEEDS FOR A POSTPANDEMIC WORLD
BY SUYIN HAYNES**

LIKE MILLIONS OF STUDENTS AROUND THE world, Greta Thunberg is still getting used to attending school virtually. But on a Sunday morning in late November, the 17-year-old Swedish climate activist—the youngest individual Person of the Year ever—says she’s enjoying having some routines back. “That’s what I missed most during the last year,” says Thunberg. It was a busy one. She sailed across the Atlantic to speak at the U.N. in New York City, turned the spotlight on Indigenous activists at the U.N. climate summit in Madrid and met world leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

Since her first school strike for the climate outside the Swedish Parliament in August 2018, millions more around the world have joined Thunberg’s movement, demanding urgent transformative change to save the planet from environmental catastrophe. And as the world has adapted to life during a global pandemic, so have the young activists fighting for the future of our planet.

“All movements have had to step back during this pandemic,” says Thunberg, whose plans for 2020—to travel to Asia via the Trans-Siberian Railway—were upended. “You have to take a few steps back for the greater good.” The introduction



Thunberg at an Oct. 9 climate protest in Stockholm

of lockdown and social distancing into everyday life has ruled out the possibility of major in-person protests. But Thunberg says she and her fellow activists were already adept at working remotely, as many of them avoid flying because of air travel’s high carbon emissions.

This year, they’ve held mass video calls and events including a virtual global climate summit, launched online campaigns to increase voter turnout and political participation during the U.S. elections, and filed landmark climate litigation that could order European governments to step up emissions reductions. And in a year when movements for racial justice have gained worldwide support, the climate movement is having a long overdue reflection on the intersections of racial and climate justice.

THE PANDEMIC, Thunberg says, is first and foremost a tragedy. Yet she says that the international response has shown how governments could act on the climate emergency. “It is possible to treat a crisis like a crisis, it is possible to put people’s health above economic interests, and it is possible to listen to the science,” she argues, adding that the pandemic has increased the value of science in many societies, as governments depend on scientific expertise to make policy decisions.

As governments speak of “green recovery plans” for a postpandemic world, Thunberg has kept up the pressure on decisionmakers. She and other activists wrote an open letter to E.U. leaders and heads of state in July, calling for actions including fossil-fuel divestment and binding annual carbon budgets. After the letter, they met in person with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and virtually with European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen and Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte. Thunberg was unimpressed.

“It’s the same as always. They say, ‘We’re not doing enough, but at least it’s better than nothing,’” Thunberg says. “The time for that is over. We now need to do the impossible.” And while she sees the election of Joe Biden as a symbolic departure from “the other one,” as she refers to outgoing President Donald Trump, she warns against complacency: “We can’t go back to sleep and think things are solved now.”

Thunberg will turn 18 in January, and seems more confident and assertive than the child who unexpectedly started a movement more than two years ago. Like most of us, she’s unsure of her plans for next year. “I’m just going to take things as they come,” she says, “and try to take it one day at a time.” Yet on the threshold of adulthood, she remains firmly convinced of her mission. “Of course, I’m going to continue to do everything I can to push in the right direction, no matter what the circumstances are.”

—With reporting by MADELINE ROACHE/LONDON



chewy

'TWAS THE YEAR OF PETS.

On Snuggler, on Wagger, on Purrer and Sniffen! You've given us joy with your love and your kissin'. You made us smile all year, you brought us good cheer. To pets great & small, Happy Holidays to all!

#PetsBringUsTogether

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TIME
Person
of the Year

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2020 THE YEAR IN Covers

'The world is longing for, and depending on, a benevolent and wise America to return to the world stage.'

—**CHRISTER ALBACK**, Vasteras, Sweden, on Charlotte Alter's Feb. 3 feature about millennial leaders in the U.S.

'BRYANT'S BIOGRAPHY MAY BE COMPLICATED, BUT IT WILL BE FULL OF ADJECTIVES DESCRIBING A BASKETBALL GENIUS AND A LOVING FATHER.'

—**LINDA ROBERTSON**, Richmond, Calif., on the Feb. 10 commemorative cover featuring Kobe Bryant, after the basketball legend's death in a helicopter crash

'I cried. About the women I did not know about. The women I forgot about. Accomplishments my children did not know about. History we have missed.'

—**BETH HALAAS**, Cheney, Wash., on the March 16/ March 23 100 Women of the Year issue

'The heroism of these people is truly admirable, but doesn't it simply underline the singular failure of governments to protect the lives of their citizens?'

—**VALERIE ZANDONA**, Athens, Greece, on the April 20 "Heroes of the Front Lines" special report on those who risked their lives during the COVID-19 pandemic

'WHEN I SAW THIS COVER, I CALLED MY MOM AND SAID, "MA, I LOVE YOU!"'

—**DIRON FORD**, Newport News, Va., on Titus Kaphar's painting of a Black mother and missing child, the cover of TIME's June 15 issue on racial-justice protests in the U.S.

'If a picture is worth a thousand words, then your "VOTE" cover with Shepard Fairey's artwork is most appropriate and encouraging during this historic election.'

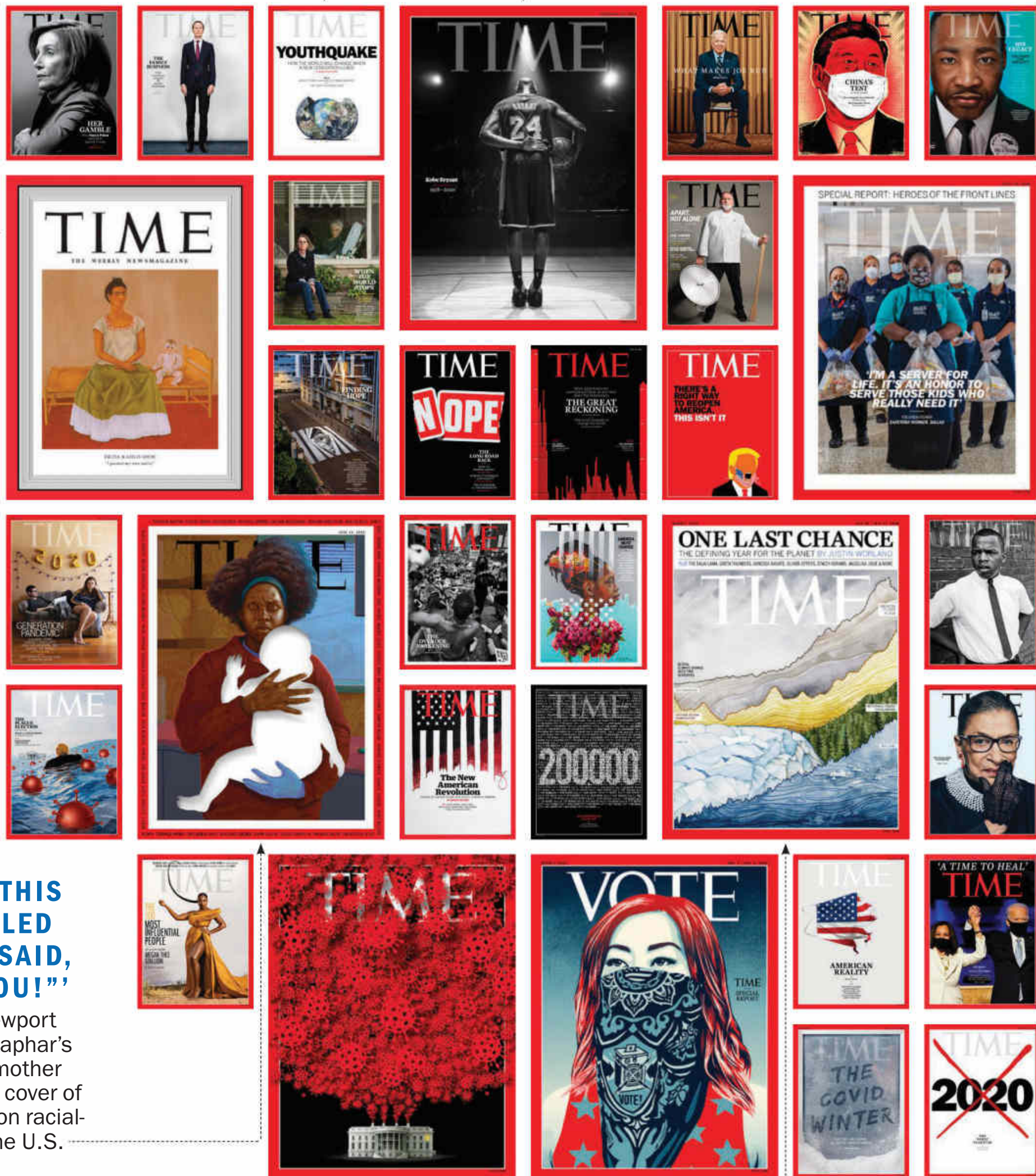
—**ASHOK KULKARNI**, West Palm Beach, Fla., on the Nov. 2/Nov. 9 issue ahead of the U.S. presidential election

'WE NEED TO CHANGE HUMANITY BEFORE WE CAN SAVE OUR PLANET.'

—**RM LAURENS**, Hinsdale, Ill., on the July 20/July 27 special issue on the state of climate change

'John Lewis was the conscience of a nation in need of one.'

—**ENRIQUE PUERTOS**, Cleveland, Ga., on the Aug. 3/Aug. 10 tribute to the late civil rights leader and U.S. Representative from Georgia



For certain adults with **newly diagnosed metastatic non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC)** that **tests positive for PD-L1**



**= A CHANCE FOR MORE
SNUGGLY SUNDAYS**

A Chance to Live Longer™

THE 1ST AND ONLY FDA-APPROVED **CHEMO-FREE COMBINATION**
OF 2 IMMUNOTHERAPIES THAT WORKS DIFFERENTLY

In a study of newly diagnosed advanced NSCLC patients, half of those on OPDIVO + YERVOY were alive at 17.1 months versus 14.9 months on platinum-based chemotherapy.

Results may vary. OPDIVO® + YERVOY® is not approved for patients younger than 18 years of age.

Indication & Important Safety Information for OPDIVO (nivolumab) + YERVOY (ipilimumab)

Only your healthcare professional knows the specifics of your condition and how OPDIVO in combination with YERVOY may fit into your overall therapy. The information below does not take the place of talking with your healthcare professional, so talk to them if you have any questions.

What are OPDIVO and YERVOY?

OPDIVO and YERVOY are prescription medicines used to treat people with a type of advanced stage lung cancer called non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). OPDIVO may be used in combination with YERVOY as your first treatment for NSCLC when your lung cancer has spread to other parts of your body (metastatic), **and** your tumors are positive for PD-L1, but do not have an abnormal EGFR or ALK gene.

It is not known if OPDIVO and YERVOY are safe and effective when used in children younger than 18 years of age.

What is the most important information I should know about OPDIVO and YERVOY?

OPDIVO and YERVOY are medicines that may treat certain cancers by working with your immune system. OPDIVO and YERVOY can cause your immune system to attack normal organs and tissues in any area of your body and can affect the way they work. These problems can sometimes become serious or life-threatening and can lead to death and may happen anytime during treatment or even after your treatment has ended. Some of these problems may happen more often when OPDIVO is used in combination with YERVOY.

YERVOY can cause serious side effects in many parts of your body which can lead to death. These problems may happen anytime during treatment with YERVOY or after you have completed treatment.

Call or see your healthcare provider right away if you develop any symptoms of the following problems or these symptoms get worse. Do not try to treat symptoms yourself.

- **Lung problems (pneumonitis).** Symptoms of pneumonitis may include: new or worsening cough; chest pain; shortness of breath
- **Intestinal problems (diarrhea or colitis) that can lead to tears or holes (perforation) in your intestine.** Signs and symptoms of colitis may include: diarrhea (loose stools) or more bowel movements than usual; mucus or blood in your stools or dark, tarry, sticky stools; stomach-area (abdomen) pain or tenderness; you may or may not have fever

- **Liver problems (hepatitis) that can lead to liver failure.** Signs and symptoms of hepatitis may include: yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes; nausea or vomiting; pain on the right side of your stomach area (abdomen); drowsiness; dark urine (tea colored); bleeding or bruising more easily than normal; feeling less hungry than usual; decreased energy
- **Hormone gland problems (especially the thyroid, pituitary, and adrenal glands; and pancreas).** Signs and symptoms that your hormone glands are not working properly may include: headaches that will not go away or unusual headaches; extreme tiredness; weight gain or weight loss; dizziness or fainting; changes in mood or behavior, such as decreased sex drive, irritability, or forgetfulness; hair loss; feeling cold; constipation; voice gets deeper; feeling more hungry or thirsty than usual; urinating more often than usual
- **Kidney problems, including nephritis and kidney failure.** Signs of kidney problems may include: decrease in the amount of urine; blood in your urine; swelling in your ankles; loss of appetite
- **Skin problems.** Signs of these problems may include: skin rash with or without itching; itching; skin blistering or peeling; sores or ulcers in mouth or other mucous membranes
- **Inflammation of the brain (encephalitis).** Signs and symptoms of encephalitis may include: headache; fever; tiredness or weakness; confusion; memory problems; sleepiness; seeing or hearing things that are not really there (hallucinations); seizures; stiff neck
- **Eye problems.** Symptoms may include: blurry vision, double vision, or other vision problems; eye pain or redness
- **Heart problems.** Signs and symptoms of heart problems may include: shortness of breath; irregular heartbeat; feeling tired; chest pain
- **Muscle and joint problems.** Signs and symptoms of muscle and joint problems may include: severe or persistent muscle or joint pains; severe muscle weakness

Additional serious side effects observed with YERVOY include:

- **Nerve problems that can lead to paralysis.** Symptoms of nerve problems may include: unusual weakness of legs, arms, or face; numbness or tingling in hands or feet



Talk to your doctor about OPDIVO + YERVOY

www.OPDIVOYERVOY.com 1-855-OPDIVOYERVOY

Get medical help immediately if you develop any of these symptoms or they get worse. It may keep these problems from becoming more serious. Your healthcare team will check you for side effects during treatment and may treat you with corticosteroid or hormone replacement medicines. If you have a serious side effect, your healthcare team may also need to delay or completely stop your treatment with OPDIVO and YERVOY.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before receiving OPDIVO and YERVOY? Before you receive OPDIVO and YERVOY, tell your healthcare provider if you: have immune system problems (autoimmune disease) such as Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, lupus, or sarcoidosis; have had an organ transplant; have lung or breathing problems; have liver problems; have any other medical conditions; are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. OPDIVO and YERVOY can harm your unborn baby. **Females who are able to become pregnant:** Your healthcare provider should do a pregnancy test before you start receiving OPDIVO and YERVOY.

- You should use an effective method of birth control during and for at least 5 months after the last dose. Talk to your healthcare provider about birth control methods that you can use during this time.
- Tell your healthcare provider right away if you become pregnant or think you are pregnant during treatment. You or your healthcare provider should contact Bristol Myers Squibb at 1-844-593-7869 as soon as you become aware of the pregnancy.
- **Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study:** Females who become pregnant during treatment with YERVOY are encouraged to enroll in a Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study. The purpose of this study is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. You or your healthcare provider can enroll in the Pregnancy Safety Surveillance Study by calling 1-844-593-7869.

If you are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed: It is not known if OPDIVO or YERVOY passes into your breast milk. **Do not** breastfeed during treatment and for 5 months after the last dose.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare providers and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

What are the possible side effects of OPDIVO and YERVOY?

OPDIVO and YERVOY can cause serious side effects, including:

- **See "What is the most important information I should know about OPDIVO and YERVOY?"**
- **Severe infusion-related reactions.** Tell your doctor or nurse right away if you get these symptoms during an infusion of OPDIVO or YERVOY: chills or shaking; itching or rash; flushing; difficulty breathing; dizziness; fever; feeling like passing out
- **Complications of stem cell transplant that uses donor cells (allogeneic). These complications, such as graft-versus-host disease, may be severe and can lead to death if you receive OPDIVO or YERVOY either before or after transplant. Your healthcare provider will monitor you for the following signs and symptoms: skin rash; liver inflammation; stomach-area (abdominal) pain; diarrhea**

The most common side effects of OPDIVO when used in combination with YERVOY include: feeling tired; diarrhea; rash; itching; nausea; pain in muscles, bones, and joints; fever; cough; decreased appetite; vomiting; stomach-area (abdominal) pain; shortness of breath; upper respiratory tract infection; headache; low thyroid hormone levels (hypothyroidism); decreased weight; dizziness.

These are not all the possible side effects of OPDIVO and YERVOY. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

OPDIVO (10 mg/mL) and YERVOY (5 mg/mL) are injections for intravenous (IV) use.

This is a brief summary of the most important information about OPDIVO and YERVOY. For more information, talk with your healthcare providers, call 1-855-673-4861, or go to www.OPDIVO.com.



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Quotes



‘George’s calls for help were ignored. Please listen to the call I’m making to you now.’

—**PHILONISE FLOYD**, in a speech to Congress on June 10, asking lawmakers to hold law enforcement accountable for instances of police brutality and misconduct, following the killing of his brother George Floyd

‘THE PRESIDENT IS GUILTY OF AN APPALLING ABUSE OF PUBLIC TRUST.’

—**MITT ROMNEY**, Senator (R., Utah), in a Feb. 5 speech confirming he would vote to convict President Donald Trump on one of two charges of impeachment brought by the House; on an otherwise party-line vote, Trump was acquitted in the Senate on both charges that day

‘My most fervent wish is that I will not be replaced until a new President is installed.’

—**RUTH BADER GINSBURG**, the late Supreme Court Justice, to her granddaughter Clara Spera, shortly before her death on Sept. 18



‘This is the first time, at least in my lifetime here, that people are saying, “Enough is enough.”’

—**FEYIKEMI ABUDU**, activist, in an Oct. 19 interview with TIME as #endSARS protests against police brutality spread across Nigeria

‘IF SHE WERE HERE NOW, SHE WOULD SAY THAT THE FIGHT IS FAR FROM OVER.’

—**DONNA STEPHENS**, wife of Supreme Court plaintiff Aimee Stephens, who died a month before the court’s historic ruling on June 15 that the 1964 Civil Rights Act protects LGBT employees from discrimination based on sex

‘It is with a heavy heart, and a sense of deep gratitude to have ever been in his presence, that I have to reckon with the fact that Chad is an ancestor now.’

—**RYAN COOGLER**, director, memorializing Chadwick Boseman after the actor’s Aug. 28 death

‘I didn’t want to be a politician, but fate put me on the front line in the fight against lawlessness.’

—**SVETLANA TIKHANOVSKAYA**, exiled Belarusian opposition leader, in an Aug. 16 video calling for “peaceful demonstrations” and a revote after a presidential election that the E.U. said was rigged



‘The great nation of Iran will take revenge for this heinous crime.’

—**HASSAN ROUHANI**, President of Iran, tweeting on Jan. 3 after the killing of Iranian general Qasem Soleimani in a targeted U.S. drone strike



‘FOR ALL THOSE PEOPLE FINDING IT DIFFICULT: THE SUN WILL SHINE ON YOU AGAIN, AND THE CLOUDS WILL GO AWAY.’

—**CAPTAIN TOM MOORE**, British centenarian and World War II veteran, who raised more than \$44 million for the U.K.’s National Health Service by walking 100 laps of his garden this past spring, finishing on April 16

‘I’ve compared it to being touched by a dementor in a Harry Potter novel—you feel that life is leaving you.’

—**ALEXEI NAVALNY**, Russian opposition leader, on being poisoned on Aug. 20 in an allegedly Kremlin-linked assassination attempt



‘I cannot express how little I care that you hate the photos. How little I care that it’s something you wouldn’t have done.’

—**CHRISSY TEIGEN**, in an Oct. 27 essay detailing her decision to document her miscarriage on social media

‘I turned to my husband, and I told him, “I’m safe.”’

—**BRIAN DE LOS SANTOS**, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipient, in a June 18 interview with TIME, after a Supreme Court ruling blocked the Trump Administration from ending the program



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Introducing ATEM Mini

The compact television studio that lets you create presentation videos and live streams!

Blackmagic Design is a leader in video for the television industry, and now you can create your own streaming videos with ATEM Mini. Simply connect HDMI cameras, computers or even microphones. Then push the buttons on the panel to switch video sources just like a professional broadcaster! You can even add titles, picture in picture overlays and mix audio! Then live stream to Zoom, Skype or YouTube!

Create Training and Educational Videos

ATEM Mini's includes everything you need. All the buttons are positioned on the front panel so it's very easy to learn. There are 4 HDMI video inputs for connecting cameras and computers, plus a USB output that looks like a webcam so you can connect to Zoom or Skype. ATEM Software Control for Mac and PC is also included, which allows access to more advanced "broadcast" features!

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ATEM Mini is really a professional broadcast switcher used by television stations. This means it has professional effects such as a DVE for picture in picture effects commonly used for commentating over a computer slide show. There are titles for presenter names, wipe effects for transitioning between sources and a green screen keyer for replacing backgrounds with graphics.

Live Stream Training and Conferences

The ATEM Mini Pro model has a built in hardware streaming engine for live streaming via its ethernet connection. This means you can live stream to YouTube, Facebook and Teams in much better quality and with perfectly smooth motion. You can even connect a hard disk or flash storage to the USB connection and record your stream for upload later!

Monitor all Video Inputs!

With so many cameras, computers and effects, things can get busy fast! The ATEM Mini Pro model features a "multiview" that lets you see all cameras, titles and program, plus streaming and recording status all on a single TV or monitor. There are even tally indicators to show when a camera is on air! Only ATEM Mini is a true professional television studio in a small compact design!

ATEM Mini.....**US\$295***

ATEM Mini Pro.....**US\$595***

ATEM Software Control.....**Free**



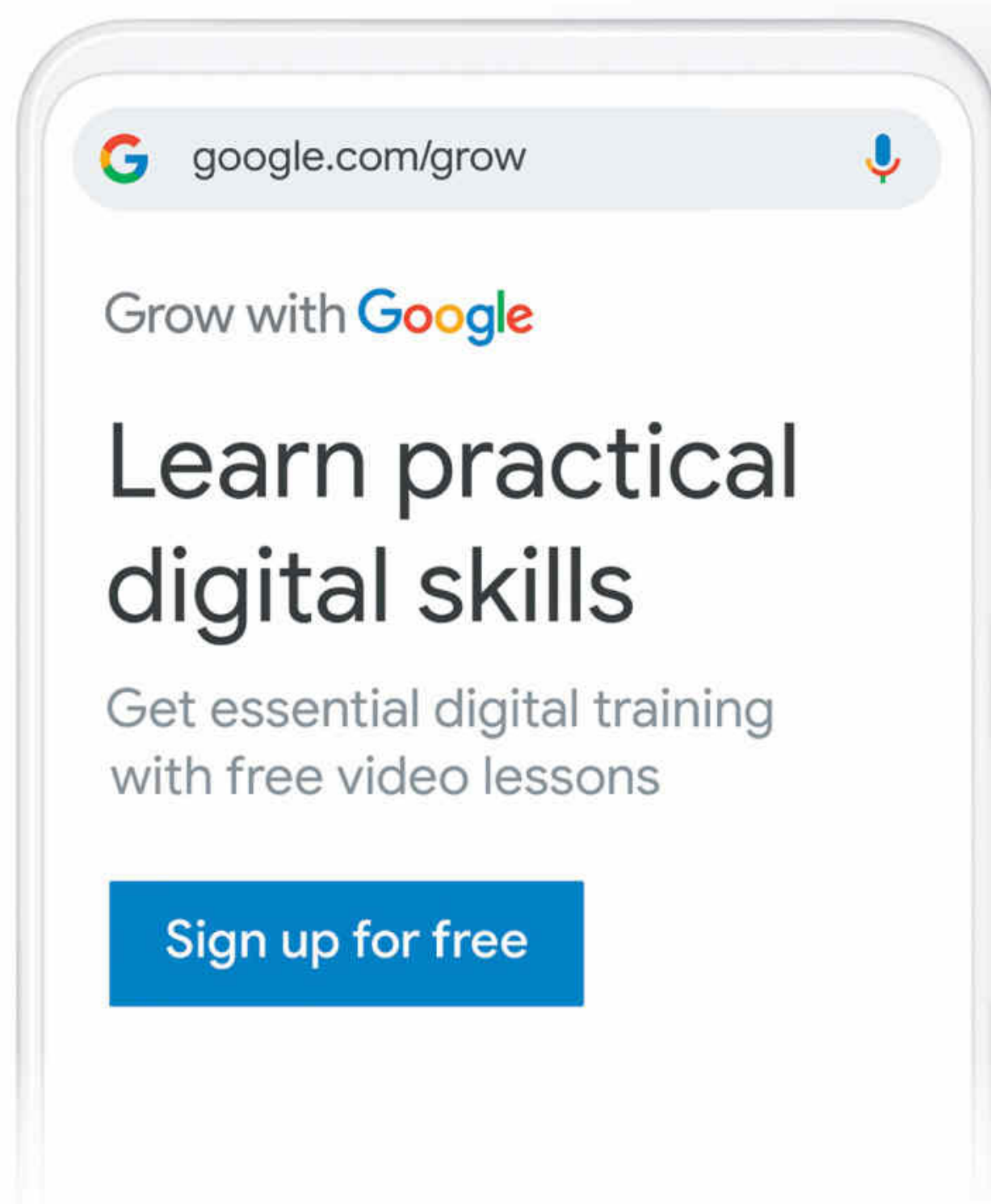
Learn more at www.blackmagicdesign.com

*Price subject to change.

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Find free tools and resources to grow
your career at **google.com/grow**

A woman with dark hair styled in a high bun, wearing an orange top and a pearl bracelet, is looking at a laptop screen. She has a slight smile and is pointing at the screen with her right hand. The background is a bright, out-of-focus window.

After being laid off, Danette Matthews wanted to make herself more marketable. As she began her search for a new job, she turned to the Applied Digital Skills program from Google.

By taking the Applied Digital Skills lessons, Danette learned essential digital skills ranging from data analysis to research and communication.

Now that she's finished the program, Danette feels ready to compete.

2020 THE YEAR IN

Then & Now

AMERICAN SCIENTISTS, 1960



Fifteen scientists were recognized as “Men of the Year” for advancements across a range of fields that TIME predicted would shape society in years to come.



U.S. scientists, along with scientists around the globe, are working with incredible speed to develop several promising COVID-19 vaccines.

TWENTY-FIVE AND UNDER, 1966



TIME tapped a generation of eager young people as inheritors of a transforming world, describing them as uniquely prepared to “embrace change as a virtue in itself.”



Gen Z also find themselves calling for sociocultural change, with young adults protesting racism, demanding climate action and navigating a fragile job market.

THE MIDDLE AMERICANS, 1969

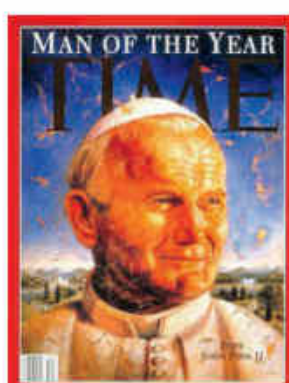


At the close of the tumultuous '60s, TIME argued “Middle Americans” who felt overlooked by their government had begun to “shape the course of the nation.”



Diminishing prospects for the American middle class are understood as a major driver of the country’s increasing political and cultural polarization.

POPE JOHN PAUL II, 1994



The first non-Italian Pope in 455 years was recognized for harnessing the papacy to “impose” his ideals on “a world that often differs with him.”



Sainted in 2014, John Paul II this year was cited in a 449-page Vatican report for promoting a now disgraced Cardinal despite being aware of accusations of sexual abuse.

KENNETH STARR, 1998



The independent counsel was named alongside President Bill Clinton, who was impeached following Starr’s investigation into his affair with Monica Lewinsky.



Demoted by Baylor University after failing to investigate sexual assaults, Starr this year served on President Trump’s legal team, decrying “the age of impeachment.”

VLADIMIR PUTIN, 2007



As the Russian President made plans to hold power after his second term, TIME noted Russia’s return to stability, despite Putin’s disdain for civil liberties.



With the approval in July of a change to the constitution, Putin looks set to stay in power until 2036, living up to the prescient 2007 cover line: “Tsar of the New Russia.”

ANGELA MERKEL, 2015



The German Chancellor was recognized for her judicious leadership of Europe and the bold risk of opening Germany’s borders to 1 million refugees.



Now in her 15th and likely final year of power, Merkel has seen her hitherto stagnating popularity receive a boost from her deft handling of the pandemic.

DONALD TRUMP, 2016



Trump won the 2016 presidential election, flipping the “blue wall” states of Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, and was “poised to preside, for better or worse.”



Trump lost all three states—plus Arizona and Georgia—in the 2020 election, after presiding over a disastrous U.S. response to COVID-19.

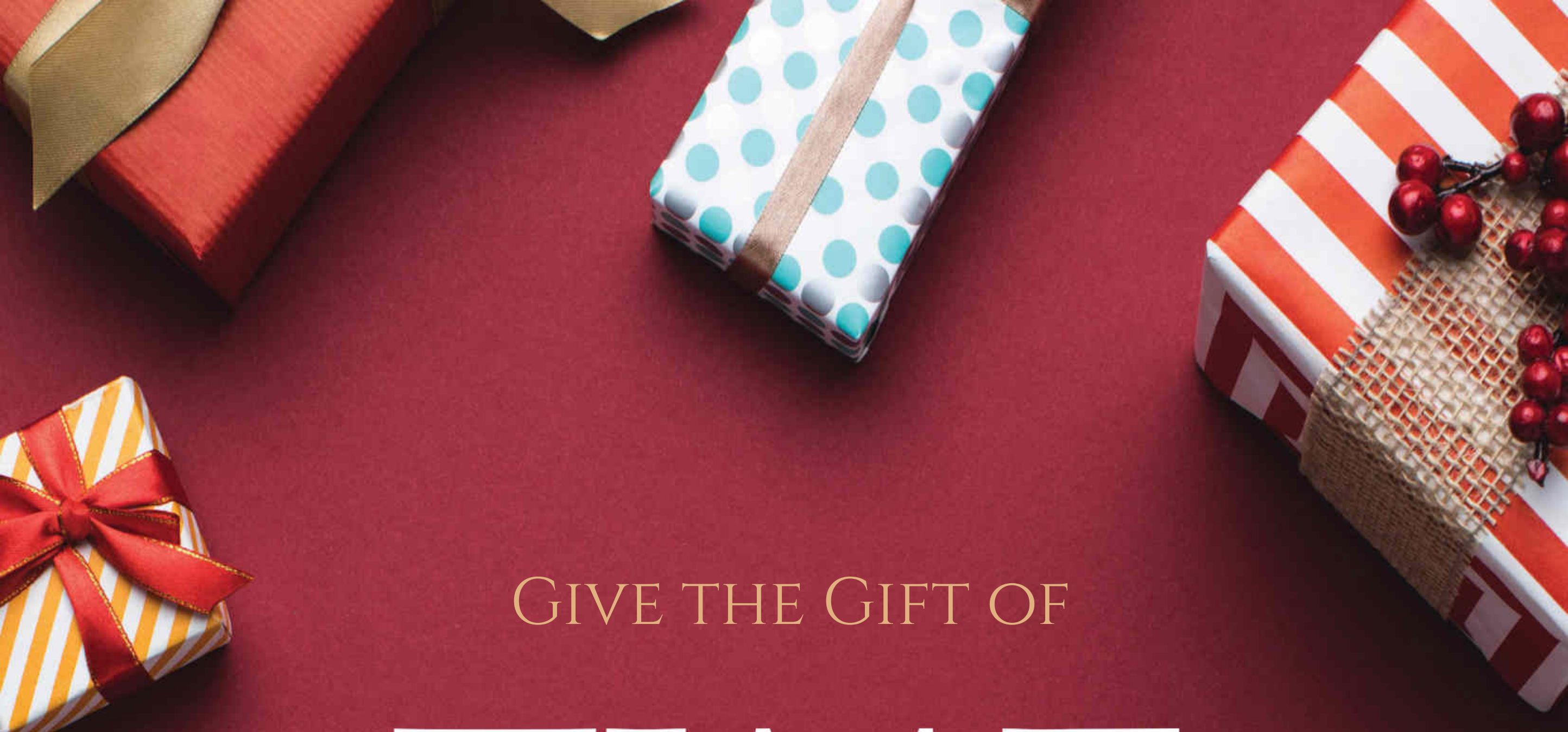
MARIA RESSA, 2018



The Filipino-American journalist was among “The Guardians” selected for taking great risks in the pursuit of facts obscured by autocrats and social media.



In what human-rights groups labeled a political prosecution, a Philippine judge in June found Ressa guilty of “cyberlibel” for her news site’s reporting on corruption.



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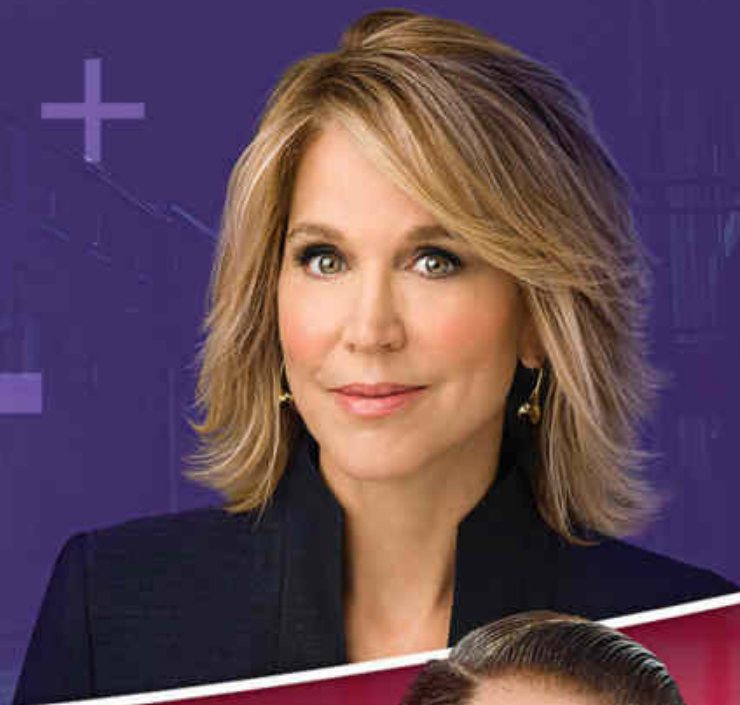
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1230

HAPPY 26th
BIRTHDAY

WE PURPLE KIM TAEHYUNG

LOVE FROM CHINA BAIDU V BAR

Firsts & Lasts

Feb. 9

Bong Joon Ho's biting class satire *Parasite* is the **first foreign-language film to win Best Picture**, at the 2020 Oscars



April 12

With sports worldwide on pause because of the pandemic, Taiwan's Chinese Professional Baseball League is the first major professional sports organization to **begin its 2020 season**



June 12

ABC confirms Matt James as the **first Black man cast as the Bachelor**, ahead of the show's 25th season

Aug. 25

The World Health Organization declares **Africa free of wild polio** for the first time



Nov. 20

Pfizer is the first **COVID-19 vaccine maker to seek FDA authorization**, closely followed by Moderna and AstraZeneca

March 18

The **Eurovision Song Contest is canceled** for the first time in the international music competition's 64-year history, over coronavirus concerns

May 26

Costa Rica becomes the first Central American country to **legalize same-sex marriage**



Aug. 14

The Pentagon announces a task force to **analyze the "nature and origins" of UFOs**, its first official acknowledgment of such active investigative work

Oct. 26

NASA confirms the first discovery of **water molecules on the moon's surface**

FIRSTS

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

LASTS



March 9

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle **attend their last public engagement** as working members of the British royal family

July 10

The last day **Istanbul's Hagia Sophia is designated as a museum**—after 85 years—following a Turkish court's ruling that reverts its status to that of a mosque

Oct. 16

Coca-Cola announces plans to **discontinue production of Tab**, its first diet soda, by the end of 2020



Dec. 1

Last day the streaming service Quibi is operational, **folding just eight months after its much touted launch**



Dec. 25

The scheduled airdate for the last *Jeopardy!* episode **featuring its 37-season host Alex Trebek**, who died on Nov. 8



Nov. 16

The day Iota—the **last named storm of the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season**—reaches Category 5 status (also the first time 30 named storms form in the Atlantic in a single year)

April 8

Last day of an **11-week lockdown in Wuhan, China**, the original epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic

Sept. 16

Japan's longest-serving **Prime Minister**, Shinzo Abe, serves his last day in office, after resigning on Aug. 28

Jan. 31

The last day the U.K. remains a **member of the European Union**, ahead of an 11-month Brexit transition period



2020 THE YEAR IN

Language

BIPOC

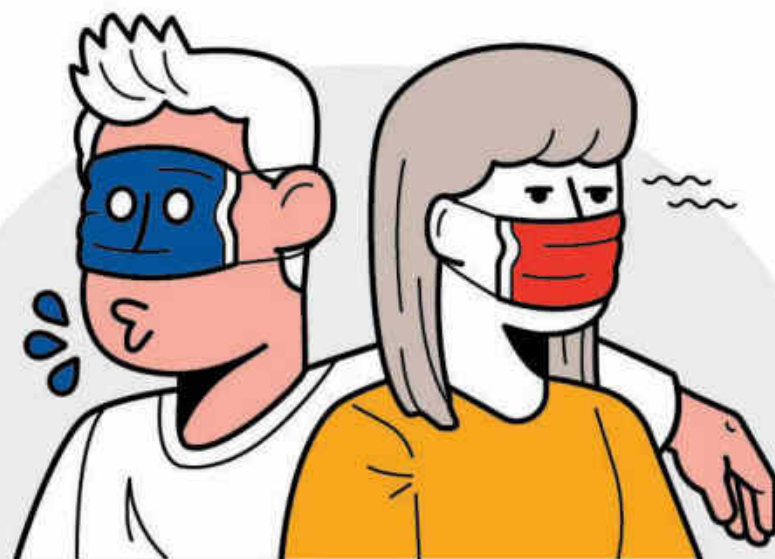
Acronym

A term for Black, Indigenous and other people of color, intended to highlight, in particular, the identities and experiences of Black and Native American communities in the U.S.

superspreader

Noun, adjective

A person or event responsible for transmitting an infectious disease to a large number of people



covidiot

Noun

A pejorative term for someone who ignores health and safety guidelines intended to prevent the spread of COVID-19

defund

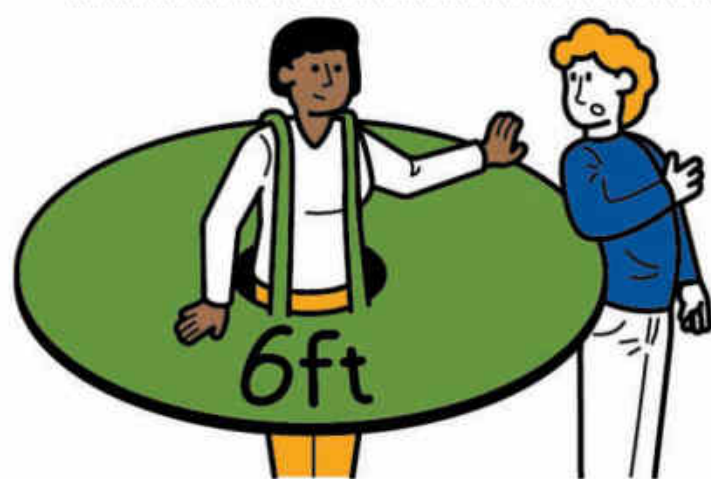
Verb

To withdraw financial support, as in calls by the movement to defund the police, which promotes a public-safety model that shifts resources from law enforcement to community-led social programs and initiatives

bubble

Noun

A small group of individuals who follow the same rules and standards for behavior—and can thus spend time together—during the pandemic, popularized by the isolation zone the NBA created at Disney World to protect basketball players



SOCIAL DISTANCING

Noun

A term for a set of measures to prevent the spread of a contagious disease, the usage of which increased by 400% this year, as authorities encouraged people to keep a safe space from people who are not in their household or “bubble” during the COVID-19 pandemic

entanglement

Noun

A reference to an extramarital affair, popularized when Jada Pinkett Smith discussed an instance of marital infidelity on an episode of her *Red Table Talk* show with her husband Will Smith



ON MUTE

Idiom

Used when a fellow video-call participant is speaking without their microphone on, as in “you’re on mute,” a refrain popularized this year on Zoom calls around the world

blursday

Noun

The fuzzy merging of time since the pandemic shut down so much of the world, making it difficult to determine what day of the week it is

Karen

Noun

A colloquial term for a white woman weaponizing her privilege, often at the expense or well-being of a BIPOC individual

simp

Noun

A colloquial term, popularized on TikTok, for a man who is overly accommodating or devoted to someone (usually a woman), or a very devout fan



quarantini

Noun

The day- or nighttime cocktail many have used to unwind amid remote work and COVID-19 lockdowns

antiracist

Adjective

Relating to people or actions working against systemic racism and the historical oppression of marginalized groups

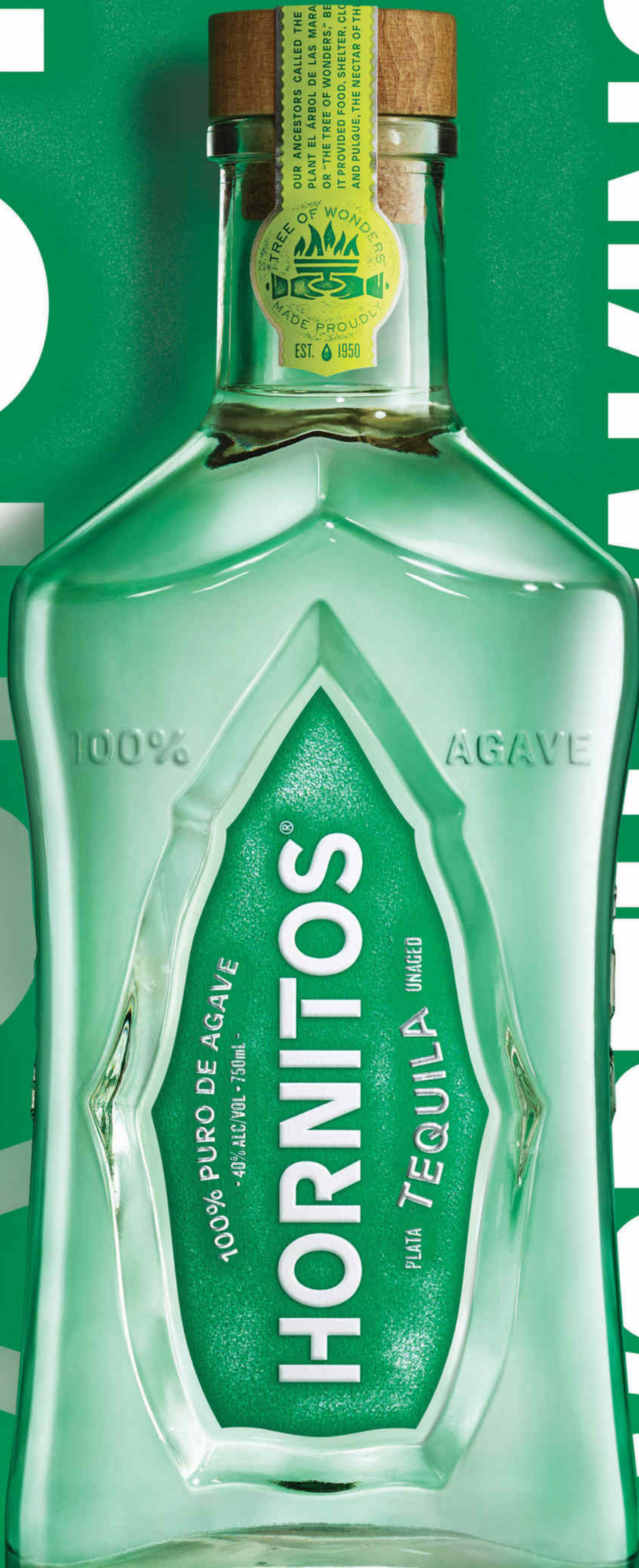


DOOMSCROLL

Verb

To addictively thumb through the deluge of bad news shared on social media in 2020, frequently undertaken at bedtime

AS THE TALKING



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Heroes

Australia's volunteer firefighters risked everything to keep their country safe

BY AMY GUNIA

IN NOVEMBER 2019, LUKE SUMMERSCALES AND Jessica Jacobs were in a remote mountain range of New South Wales, fighting some of the worst bushfires on record in Australia, when another disaster struck: a fellow firefighter collapsed from a heart attack. The nearest ambulance was more than an hour away and the terrain was too steep for a rescue helicopter to land, so the pair started doing CPR on 53-year-old John Kennedy.

Fires burning around them, Summerscales and Jacobs struggled to get defibrillator pads to stick to Kennedy's chest. They performed CPR for 45 minutes before Kennedy was able to breathe on his own.

"We lost him three times, but we got him back every time," Jacobs says. "We're so lucky to have been able to really make a difference."

In November 2020, the Country Fire Authority, a fire-management organization, recognized their actions by giving them both Chief Officer Commendation awards. But Summerscales and Jacobs aren't professional firefighters—they're volunteers. Summerscales builds houses for a living; Jacobs works as a university lab technician. Starting in late 2019, as record fires raged across their nation during its summer season, they joined tens of thousands of Australians who set aside their usual lives to help stop the spread of the blazes.

AS CLIMATE CHANGE HEIGHTENS both the frequency and intensity of bushfires, firefighters are being tested to new extremes. Australia is unusually reliant on volunteer labor—in the state of New South Wales, which suffered some of the country's most severe fires during the 2019–2020 bushfire season, close to 90% of the men and women fighting



fires were volunteers. It's been this way for more than a century in Australia, with ordinary citizens working together to protect the land. But last year especially, their service came with incredible sacrifice: they gave up the holidays with their families, took time off work, and lost income to fight infernos that burned for several months in 2019 and early 2020. Three volunteer firefighters lost their lives.

MATTHEW ABBOTT—
THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX



2019 was Australia's hottest and driest on record, and the resulting fires all but exhausted the men and women constantly called to battle them. Peter Holding, 66, who has been a volunteer firefighter for 43 years, says he's never seen anything as severe as last summer's bushfire season—a devastating period now known as the Black Summer. "There's going to have to be some very serious effort put into

Firefighters on the outskirts of Bredbo, New South Wales, Australia, on Feb. 1

reducing emissions if we're going to stop this from getting any worse," he says.

Still, as Australia's fire season intensifies in late 2020, its volunteer firefighters are preparing to do battle again. "It's about the impact we have on the community and the people we help," Summerscales says. "It's that feeling that you made a difference."

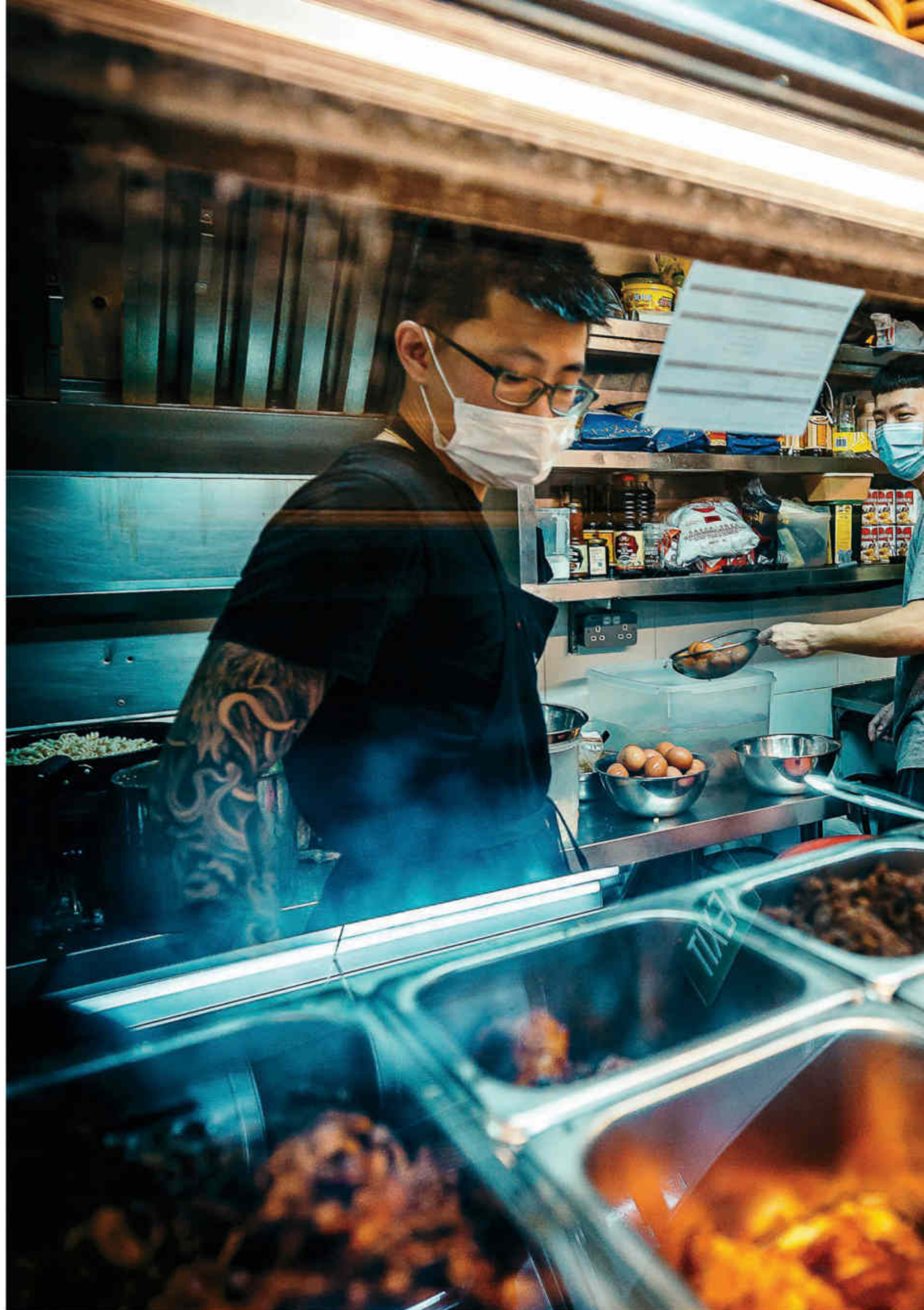
□

THE PASTORS WHO TRANSFORMED THEIR CHURCH TO SUPPORT THEIR COMMUNITY

Pastor Reshorna Fitzpatrick and her husband, Bishop Derrick Fitzpatrick, are used to public service, having spent the past two decades leading Stone Temple Missionary Baptist Church on Chicago's West Side. But their efforts intensified this year as the couple transformed their church into a hub of community outreach: a food bank, a distributor of cleaning supplies, a stage for self-expression and more.

In April, with members of their congregation and neighborhood among the millions of Americans out of work, the couple began giving out roughly 300 food boxes a week to those in need. Produce from the church's community garden also filled the "love fridge," an outdoor refrigerator near the church stocked with free food. When funds for their food-box initiative ran out, they partnered with the Urban Growers Collective, a local Black- and women-led nonprofit farm, to source fresh produce. The Fitzpatricks also launched a "Soup for the Soul" program, where community members can pick up hot soup made by local chefs every Monday. "I really do believe that we are our brother's keeper," Reshorna says.

The church has also provided the local community with at least 20,000 masks, as well as hand sanitizer and other supplies. This summer, the Fitzpatricks hosted socially distanced outdoor services, and in the fall built an outdoor stage where members of the community put on performances and share stories. "People are more easily able to talk about the need," Derrick says of the pandemic's impact on long disenfranchised community members. The Fitzpatricks know it's been a difficult year, but say they feel more connected than ever. "I live to make sure that people are blessed," says Reshorna. —*Abigail Abrams*



The food-stall owners who wouldn't let anyone go hungry

As restaurants around the world took huge hits during COVID-19 lockdowns, two food-stall owners in Singapore remained busier than ever. When the Southeast Asian city-state went into a "circuit breaker" lockdown in April to stop the spread of the coronavirus, Jason Chua and Hung Zhen Long, who co-own Beng Who Cooks in the popular Hong Lim Market & Food Centre, took to delivering food—free of charge—to anyone who couldn't afford it.

Chua says the idea was prompted by a friend who told him about seeing an elderly man begging for money in a coffee shop;

the friend asked Chua if they could do something to help. Just hours later, Chua and Hung shared a message on the Beng Who Cooks Instagram page, telling Singaporeans to reach out if they needed a free meal, with a promise to not ask any questions. They were soon inundated with requests.

Chua and Hung put up roughly \$6,000 of their personal funds for the cause, while Chua's friend—the one who had raised the initial concern about food access during the pandemic—donated \$5,000 more. From April to June, when lockdown measures eased, Chua estimates that they gave away around 2,500 meals—each



COURTESY DERRICK FITZPATRICK; BENG WHO COOKS: AIK KAI TEO;
COURTESY GREG DAILEY; COURTESY RAHUL DUBEY

consisting of a bowl of rice, a protein and two vegetables.

Life has largely returned to normal in Singapore, where COVID-19 is currently under control. Beng Who Cooks has stopped its deliveries, and Chua and Hung have shuttered the food stall to focus on a new endeavor: opening a restaurant. But their work during lockdown gave new meaning to goodwill, which accountants, when determining the full value of a business, describe as an intangible asset. Not that this was about business. “I don’t want to see kids or families go hungry,” Chua says. —A.G.



The man who made a paper route a lifeline

In mid-March, terrified of catching COVID-19, Phyllis Ross, 88, asked her newspaper deliveryman if he’d throw the paper closer to her West Windsor, N.J., home. Greg Dailey, was happy to oblige.

Days later, Ross’s predicament was still on Dailey’s mind. If Ross couldn’t make it to the sidewalk, how could she possibly buy food? So he called to ask: Did she need anything from the grocery store? Ross jumped at the chance—and asked if he wouldn’t mind also getting food for her neighbor.

The request inspired Dailey to think of a new delivery service. The following Saturday, he left a note in the newspapers for all 800 houses on his route, offering to drop off goods to anyone in need—free of charge. He hadn’t even made it home before the calls started rolling in.

Initially overwhelmed, Dailey quickly got to work with the help of his family. They were soon spending 12 hours a day delivering food to senior citizens in need. The family has since supplied more than 140 homes and conducted more than 1,000 grocery runs in the Mercer County area—and they’re still going. “Other than raising my three kids, it’s been the most rewarding thing I’ve ever done,” Dailey says. —Madeleine Carlisle

THE NEIGHBOR WHO SHELTERED THOSE IN NEED

On June 1, as demonstrators filled the streets of Washington, D.C., to protest the killing of George Floyd, Rahul Dubey was at his home, not far from the White House. After a 7 p.m. curfew, he noticed crowds in the street outside: police had set up barricades seemingly to trap protesters, and were pepper-spraying those who remained. Dubey decided to take action.

“I open my door, and I start yelling, ‘Get in!’” says Dubey, who works in health care. “All these people were swarming in.” Dubey estimates he gave 70 protesters refuge, housing them overnight to avoid curfew breaches.

“People were coughing, crying, strangers pouring milk into strangers’ eyes,” Dubey says. “They were sharing information, writing down numbers for bail bondsmen. It was this real camaraderie.” Dubey claims police officers made several attempts to breach his sanctuary that evening: posing as protesters trying to get inside, and attempting to intercept the pizza delivery he had ordered for his houseguests.

The move to open his door was driven by instinct, Dubey says nearly six months later. “It’s what was needed.”

—Josiah Bates



Here's to the neighborhood heroes who gave the world hope

We're proud to present
TIME's Heroes of the Year
and share their stories.



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2020 *Person of the Year*

JOE BIDEN
& KAMALA
HARRIS





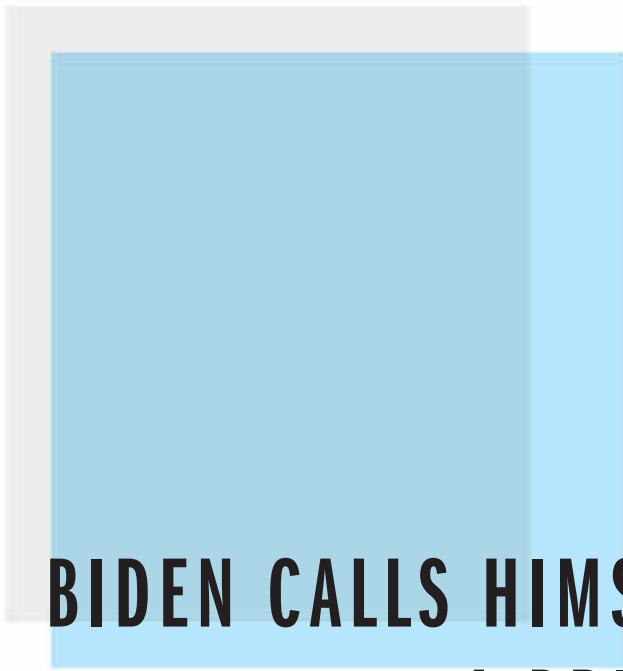
The Choice

BY EDWARD FELSENTHAL

TIME's Person of the Year over the course of nearly a century has been a measuring stick for where the world is and where it's going. But how to make sense of 2020, a year without measure?

A year marked by multiple crises, all at once, all over the world: A once-in-a-century plague. Brutal racial injustice. Glaring inequality. Apocalyptic wildfires. Democracy under fire.

It was a particularly humbling year for the most powerful nation on earth—a wake-up call for those more accustomed to seeing America, despite its flaws, as a beacon for the world. The U.S. has seen by far the most confirmed cases of COVID-19 of any country, and some of the worst fatality rates. The killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade and many more brought about a reckoning with systemic racism, long overdue and extraordinary in scale. Economic inequality deepened. Almost 1 in 8 American adults reported that their household didn't have enough to eat at some point in November.



BIDEN CALLS HIMSELF

A BRIDGE TO A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS, A ROLE HE EMBRACED IN CHOOSING KAMALA HARRIS



Devastating fires across the West Coast showed how unprepared we are for climate change. Conflicts over voting tallies and the science of wearing masks showed how divided we are even on basic facts.

Joe Biden was elected President of the United States in the midst of an existential debate over what reality we inhabit. Perhaps the only thing Americans agree on right now is that the future of the country is at stake, even as they fiercely disagree about why. Dismissed as out of touch on the left and misrepresented as a socialist from his right, Biden stood his ground near the center and managed to thrive even as the social, digital and racial landscape around him shifted. With more than 51%, Biden won a higher percentage of the popular vote than any challenger to a presidential incumbent since Franklin Roosevelt in 1932. “What I got most criticized for was I said we had to unite America,” he told me in a conversation (masks off, 16 ft. apart) at his unofficial transition hub in Wilmington, Del., on Dec. 7. “I never came off that message in the primary or in the general election.” Whether America can be, or even wants to be, united is a question he will soon have to face.

It is noteworthy that a year after selecting climate activist Greta Thunberg, the youngest person ever named Person of the Year, we move to one of the oldest in the 78-year-old President-elect. Biden calls himself a bridge to a new generation of leaders, a role he embraced in choosing Kamala Harris, 56, the first woman on a winning presidential ticket, daughter of a Jamaican father and an Indian mother. If Donald Trump was a force for disruption and division over the past four years, Biden and Harris show where the nation is heading: a blend of ethnicities, lived experiences and worldviews that must find a way forward together if the American experiment is to survive.

“I will be the first, but I will not be the last,” Harris told TIME. “And that’s about legacy, that’s about creating a pathway, that’s about leaving the door more open than it was when you walked in.”

TIME FROM ITS BEGINNINGS has had a special connection to the presidency, as a reflection of America and its role in the world. Every elected President since FDR has at some point during his term been a Person of the Year, nearly a dozen of those in a presidential election year. This is the first time we have included a Vice President. In a year that saw an epic struggle for racial justice, and one of the most consequential elections in history, the Biden-Harris partnership sends a powerful message. “The tell of this election,” says Harris, is that regardless of “your race, your ethnicity, the language your grandmother speaks, let’s move forward knowing that the vast majority of us have more in common than what separates us.”

The task before the new Administration is immense: a pandemic to confront, an economy to fix, a climate crisis to tackle, alliances to rebuild, deep skepticism to overcome with many Americans dubious about unity with Trump voters, and an opposition party still very much under Trump’s sway. How to begin to reach out to, much less lead, the Americans who profess to believe that Donald Trump won the election? I asked Biden. His answer was, more or less, Trust me and trust the American people. “You’re going to see an awful lot of Republicans in the House and the Senate willing to ... work with me,” Biden says. “I think that’s what I’ve done my whole career.”

This will be the test of the next four years: Americans who haven’t been this divided in more than a century elected two leaders who have bet their success on finding common ground. The odds may be long. But it will be among the most critical chapters in the arduous quest for a more perfect union.

For changing the American story, for showing that the forces of empathy are greater than the furies of division, for sharing a vision of healing in a grieving world, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are TIME’s 2020 Person of the Year. □

2020 Person of the Year

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, President-Elect and Vice President-Elect of the United States

By Charlotte Alter

T

TO GET PAST THE STAGE-DOOR ENTRANCE OF THE QUEEN THEATER, you need a negative COVID-19 test and a particular type of N95 mask. You have to promise not to eat or drink inside, and answer a questionnaire about your recent whereabouts, and then comes the Secret Service protocol (the sweep, the wands). Once you're in, the floors normally sticky with spilled drinks are instead dotted with distance-marking tape for reasons that are obvious: this is where President-elect Joe Biden is basing his transition, and President-elect Biden takes COVID-19 very, very seriously.

"They told me we were gonna lose the campaign because of all this, remember?" Biden says in a Dec. 7 interview, gesturing at the precautions from a brown leather chair in a room above the stage. But "the good news," Biden smiles, is he and his team "didn't listen to anybody." Like all such venues these days, the historic Wilmington, Del., playhouse is silent and empty. Instead of concerts, its fading green-and-red murals look down on a new production that's opened out of town: a semicircle of blue-draped tables surrounding a lectern before a screen projecting the seal of the President-elect of the United States. Upstairs, Biden keeps a 16-ft. distance from everyone as he makes final preparations to take on the role of a lifetime.

As Biden sees it, trusting his instincts and tuning out the nay-sayers is a big reason why he's going to be the next Commander in Chief. They said he was too old, too unsteady, too boring. That his pledge to restore the "soul of the nation" felt like antiquated hokum at a moment when Hurricane Trump was tearing through America, ripping through institutions, chewing up norms and spitting them out. "I got widely criticized," Biden recalls, for "saying that we had to not greet Trump with a clenched fist but with more of an open hand. That we weren't going to respond to hate with hate." To him, it wasn't about fighting Trump with righteous vengeance, or probing

Biden and Harris onstage in Wilmington, Del., at the end of the Democratic National Convention, which was held virtually because of the pandemic





any deeper rot that might have contributed to his ascent. Biden believed most voters simply wanted reconciliation after four years of combat, that they craved decency, dignity, experience and competence. “What I got most criticized for was, I said we had to unite America,” he says. “I never came off that message.”

Biden had the vision, set the tone and topped the ticket. But he also recognized what he could not offer on his own, what a 78-year-old white man could never provide: generational change, a fresh perspective, and an embodiment of America’s diversity. For that, he needed Kamala Harris: California Senator, former district attorney and state attorney general, a biracial child of immigrants whose charisma and tough questioning of Trump Administration officials electrified millions of Democrats. The Vice President has never before been a woman, or Black, or Asian American. “I will be the first, but I will not be the last,” Harris says in a separate interview. “That’s about legacy, that’s about creating a pathway, that’s about leaving the door more open than it was when you walked in.”

The Democratic ticket was an unlikely partnership: forged in conflict and fused over Zoom, divided by generation, race and gender. They come from different coasts, different ideologies, different Americas. But they also have much in common, says Biden: working-class backgrounds, blended families, shared values. “We could have been raised by the same mother,” he says. In an age of tribalism, the union aims to demonstrate that differences don’t have to be divides.

NO ONE KNOWS the nature of this type of partnership better than Biden, who lived for eight years in the house Harris is about to move into. He has made the same commitment to her that he extracted from Barack Obama: that the VP will be the last person in the room after meetings, consulted on all big decisions. The two communicate every day, by telephone or text message, and Harris has offered welcome advice on Cabinet selections. “The way that he refers to himself *and* her when he speaks, he’s already making his biggest decisions with her at [his] side,” says Maya Harris, Kamala’s sister and closest confidant. Picking her as running mate “obviously has historic significance,” she says, “but clearly it’s been a choice that’s not about symbolism. It’s substantive.”

Together, they offered restoration and renewal in a single ticket. And America bought what they were selling: after the highest turnout in a century, they racked up 81 million votes and counting, the most in presidential history, topping Trump by some 7 million votes and flipping five battleground states.

Defeating the Minotaur was one thing; finding the way out of the labyrinth is another. A dark winter has descended, and there will be no rest for the victors. Trump is waging information warfare against his own people, the first President in history to openly subvert the peaceful transfer of power. The country



has reached a grim new milestone: more than 3,000 COVID-19 deaths in one day. Millions of children are falling behind in their education; millions of parents are out of work. There is not only a COVID-19 crisis and an economic crisis to solve, but also “a long overdue reckoning on racial injustice and a climate crisis,” Harris says. “We have to be able to multitask.”

Given the scale and array of America’s problems, the question may not be whether this team can solve them but whether anyone could. U.S. politics has become a hellscape of intractable polarization, plagued by disinformation and mass delusion. Polling shows three-quarters of Trump voters wrongly believe the election was tainted by fraud. After four years of a

Biden campaigns in New Hampshire on Feb. 9; his fifth-place finish in the primary was a low point, 18 days before his win in South Carolina



White House that acted as a celebrity-driven rage machine, it seems naive to think of the presidency as an engine of progress.

So while Biden will be the 46th man to serve as President, he may be the first since Lincoln to inherit a Republic that is questioning the viability of its union. “This moment was one of those do-or-die moments,” Biden says. “Had Trump won, I think we would have changed the nature of who we are as a country for a long time.” Yet Trump, many experts argue, is not the aberration Biden describes but rather a symptom of America’s chronic conditions: a legacy of racism and widening inequality that undermines both its ideals and its functioning.

Biden and Harris share a faith that empathetic governance can restore the solidarity we’ve lost. Biden told *TIME* he has lately been reading about Franklin D. Roosevelt’s first 100 days, when FDR worked to pull the nation out of the Great Depression, a feat that helped restore confidence in democracy. “We’re the only country in the world that has come out of every crisis stronger than we went into the crisis,” he insists. “I predict we will come out of this crisis stronger than when we went in.” Their challenge is, above all, not about any one policy, proposal or piece of legislation. It is convincing America that a future exists, for all of us, together. It is nothing less than reconciling America with itself.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY LUONG FOR TIME

THEY ARE PARTNERS NOW, but they were rivals once. When the Democratic primary candidates met for their first debate in June 2019, Biden was the front runner, though he didn't look much like one. His organization was rickety, his speeches baggy, his message seemingly out of step with the party's mood. Harris looked equally lost, stagnant in the polls and shuffling campaign messages. After launching her campaign with fanfare—20,000 people turned out to her kickoff rally in Oakland, Calif.—she struggled to find her footing in a crowded field.

On a hot night in Miami, the Democrats' past and future collided. Advisers had warned Biden that rivals would target his sepia-toned musings about compromises struck in Senate cloakrooms. But he wasn't ready for Harris' attack. "As the only Black person on this stage, I would like to speak on the issue of race," she said, turning to address Biden. She told him it was "hurtful" to hear him praise segregationist Senators who had been his colleagues. "Not only that, but you also worked with them to oppose busing," she continued. "There was a little girl in California who was part of the second class to integrate her public schools, and she was bused to school every day. And that little girl was me." To Harris' supporters and many more African Americans, the moment was a battle cry. Biden backers saw an ambush: within hours, her campaign had designed T-shirts with Harris' childhood picture above those words.

In fact, the issue was more complex than it seemed. In the 1970s, Biden opposed federally mandated busing, not voluntary programs like the one Harris had participated in in Berkeley. Nor did Harris believe a federal mandate was necessary; her own stance was nearly identical to Biden's. But to many Americans, it was powerful to see the only Black candidate on-stage discuss sensitive policy through the prism of her lived experience. There was neither mystery nor malice to the confrontation. Harris was searching for momentum, and Biden was the primary's piñata; to many, it seemed inevitable that he would fade, and whoever took him down might inherit the favor of the Democratic establishment.

But Biden was taken aback. Harris had been close with his son Beau while they both served as attorneys general of their states. Despite criticism of his involvement with regressive criminal-justice policy in the 1990s, Biden's longtime advocacy for civil rights was a point of personal pride and had helped earn him the loyalty of many Black voters. While Biden did not hold a grudge, advisers say, his family, particularly his wife Jill Biden, was upset. Today, she concedes the exchange was a "surprise" because of Harris' friendship with Beau, who died of brain cancer in 2015, but noted others on the debate stage criticized Biden as well. "This is a marriage, and I feel very protective of my husband and my children, as is any mother," she tells TIME. "You move beyond it—that's politics."



Whatever boost Harris got in the primary was short-lived. She ran low on cash, sank in the polls and dropped out of the race in December. Biden seemed not far behind, limping to a fourth-place finish in Iowa and slipping to fifth in New Hampshire. That was the "lowest point," Jill Biden recalls. "I had a feeling we weren't going to win, but I didn't think we would come in fifth. Nor did Joe."

Biden had always believed his support among Black voters would buoy his campaign in the Feb. 29 South Carolina primary. After a key endorsement from House majority whip Jim Clyburn, he won by nearly 30 points, establishing himself as the most credible alternative to Senator Bernie Sanders, who had been

Harris stops for lunch in Waterloo, Iowa, in September 2019; she abandoned her presidential bid less than three months later



threatening to run away with the race. Fearful that a Sanders nomination would mean a second term for Trump, Biden's moderate rivals Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar dropped out and endorsed him. Soon after, Biden cleaned up on Super Tuesday, winning 10 of 14 states and effectively clinching the contest. Harris endorsed Biden the next weekend, the 55th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, just before walking across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala., with Representative John Lewis.

Biden felt vindicated. Progressives had insisted the party was in a revolutionary mood; instead, voters chose Biden's pragmatism. Doubters predicted Biden's record on race would haunt him; instead, he

had Black voters to thank for reviving his campaign. Critics had lampooned "unity" as boring pabulum; instead, it seemed to resonate. "I was able to, against advice from a lot of people, do the things that I was told were gonna hurt me politically," Biden says. "But I would argue that it turned out that that's what the American people were looking for: they're looking for some honesty, decency, respect, unity."

JUST AS HE FOUND his footing, the ground shifted beneath his feet. By March 10, it was clear that the coronavirus would make it impossible to run a traditional campaign. "It was the culmination of all of the work that we've done for a year," says Biden's deputy

PHOTOGRAPH BY SEPTEMBER DAWN BOTTOMS FOR TIME



campaign manager and incoming White House communications director Kate Bedingfield. “And we were having to think about, How are we going to reinvent campaigning in the general election?”

Biden canceled a planned rally in Ohio and returned to Philadelphia to speak to the whole staff in person for the last time. The campaign headquarters emptied out; the team retreated to their couches, where they marshaled volunteers online and tried to build camaraderie over Signal and Zoom. Biden himself retreated down the winding driveway to his 7,000-sq.-ft. home in Greenville, Del., past poplars, beech and oak trees, to his book-filled study overlooking a lake, where he would spend much of the next eight months.

Campaigns are fueled by excitement; Biden didn’t seem to have it. The situation had its advantages: being homebound disciplined a gaffe-prone candidate, and his themes of empathy and compassion resonated amid the ravages of COVID-19. But running for President online also neutralized Biden’s ability to connect with ordinary people through hugs and handshakes. The candidate’s lack of visibility meant picking a running mate would be one of his few big turns in the spotlight, and a more momentous decision than usual.

Biden was looking for his own Biden: someone reliable, simpatico and loyal, as he was to Obama. But he wanted more than compatibility. The septuagenarian nominee needed a youthful governing partner who was prepared to step in as Commander in Chief if needed, and a battle-tested running mate who would not create distractions and could keep the race focused on Trump. As an old white man leading a party reliant on voters of color, young people and women, Biden also needed to balance the ticket. In March, he had promised to pick a female Vice President; over the summer, the

racial-justice protests that erupted after George Floyd’s killing increased pressure to choose a Black woman.

Biden’s selection committee, augmented by a team of vetting lawyers, initially interviewed nearly two dozen women, before whittling the list down to 11 people for Biden to interview. After Floyd’s death put racial justice front and center, Harris stood out in her conversations with the committee, discussing criminal-justice legislation she was leading in the Senate and her work on similar issues as attorney general. “She also brought a lived experience as a Black woman,” says Representative Lisa Blunt Rochester, who served as co-chair of the vetting committee. “She could talk from the perspective of her professional life as well as her personal life, and what we could and should do in the wake of his tragic murder.”

At 55, Harris was a generation Biden’s junior. She had experience in federal and state office, and had weathered the scrutiny that comes with running for President, even if her campaign didn’t succeed. She was a versatile politician, moving deftly from dissecting witnesses in hearings to dancing in drum lines. No major factions in the party opposed her, and most Democrats thrilled to the idea of putting the first woman of color on a major presidential ticket. But Biden, the connection candidate, didn’t just see a symbol or an appeal to a particular demographic; he perceived an ability, rooted in her upbringing, to see a better future for Americans like herself. “Her superpower is her multiple identities,” says Glynda Carr, CEO of Higher Heights, a political action committee that helps Black women run for office.

Some Biden allies remained wary of Harris. His family was the hardest sell. But Biden insisted he harbored no hard feelings from the debate skirmish.

Harris campaigns in McAllen, Texas, on Oct. 30, part of a late play to win the Lone Star State that fell short



A masked Biden speaks to supporters in Philadelphia on Election Day

“He made it very clear that he was a big boy and wasn’t going to let that color him,” says Clyburn, who urged Biden to pick a Black woman and told him that many people, including Clyburn’s own late wife, had rooted for a Biden-Harris ticket from the start. Once Biden decided Harris was the best pick, the rest of the inner circle got behind the decision. Jill Biden was the one who called the vetting committee to inform them of the choice. “At the end of the day, it was his decision, and one that he made essentially alone,” Bedingfield says.

Harris was in her apartment in Washington’s West End neighborhood when her team learned that Biden wanted to reach her. She started getting ready to take the call. Then, an update: Biden wanted to talk over Zoom. A brief panic ensued as she scrambled to get herself video-ready. It “wasn’t actually one of my Zoom days,” she says. “That required a whole preparation process to be Zoom-ready for the Vice President.”

Biden cut to the chase. “Immediately he said, ‘So, you want to do this?’” Harris recalls, paraphrasing their conversation. “That’s who Joe is. There’s no pomp and circumstance with him. He’s a straight shooter.” Her husband Doug Emhoff and Jill Biden soon joined them on the call; within an hour, her apartment filled with campaign staffers carrying briefing binders. The next day, she was in Wilmington, where Jill greeted them with a plate of homemade cookies. To join the Biden campaign was to join the Biden family, and Harris and Emhoff spent about a week visiting with the Bidens and getting to know their kids, while Biden talked over the phone with Harris’ mother-in-law and her adult stepchildren, Cole and Ella. Harris’ relationship with Emhoff’s kids, who call her Momala, reminded Biden of

his own wife’s relationship with his sons Beau and Hunter: a “blended family,” he calls it, where there’s “no distinction in their house.”

Picking a former rival—one whose dynamism might exceed his own—was a move that Trump never would have made. It “revealed a lot about Joe Biden,” says former Representative Steve Israel. “And she had the pronounced effect of mobilizing Democrats across the country.”

JOSEPH ROBINETTE BIDEN JR. has wanted to be President ever since he was a little boy with a mouth full of pebbles, reciting poetry to try to cure himself of his stutter. When his future mother-in-law asked what he planned to make of himself, Biden said “President,” adding, “of the United States.” Before she died in a car accident in 1972, his first wife Neilia told friends her husband would run the country one day; many years later, when Biden was in the twilight of his vice presidency, his son Beau, racked with terminal cancer and beginning to lose his speech, begged him not to abandon public life. He’s run for the Oval Office three times, worked with eight Presidents and served as Vice President for eight years in a career that stretched from the Senate to the Situation Room to countless swing-state diners and union halls. His operatic life story has veered from grief to triumph, rising star to tragic figure, statesman to survivor.

Biden’s American Dream began in the rosy aftermath of World War II, when America was flush with pride from its triumph over fascism. It was a Rockwell upbringing—football games, soda-pop shops—but it wasn’t always easy. At times money was tight; when Joe was 10, the family had to move in with his grandparents before his father found a job selling

A VAST, DIVERSE COALITION

Biden and Harris set a presidential-campaign record with more than 81 million votes. These are some of the supporters who delivered the victory

By Lissandra Villa and Vera Bergengruen



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1. ERIE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

“We saw him as a champion [of] democracy and human rights globally,” Rabih Hoblos (*second from right*), a retired engineer and Democratic organizer, says of Biden. Trump took Erie County in 2016; Biden won it back.

2. CARTERSVILLE, GEORGIA

“She said, ‘Don’t tweet behind a computer screen—get out there!’” says Latitia Stephens (*center*), recalling the advice Stacey Abrams offered at a 2018 campaign event, which inspired her to volunteer for the Biden and Harris campaign.

3. NAVAJO COUNTY, ARIZONA

Leading a team that drove more than 66,000 miles through the Navajo Nation, Tara Benally and Dalene Redhorse helped register nearly 4,700 Arizona voters crucial to turning the state blue. “It was Indigenous nations that put Biden in office,” says Benally (*left*).

4. MILWAUKEE

“Watching these girls see somebody ascend to that office and know that they could do that too—it felt really inspiring and heartwarming,” Eileen Force Cahill (*third from right*), a member of the board of directors for Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin, says of Harris.



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5. DETROIT

This election was “like the organizing Super Bowl,” says Vanessa Velazquez (*right*) of Detroit Action, a grassroots advocacy group. The organization formally endorsed Senator Bernie Sanders in the primary, but later encouraged voters to support the Democratic ticket.

6. LAS VEGAS

“I felt so happy when [Biden] won, that it had all been worth it,” says Maria Orozco (*second from left*), a member of the Culinary Workers Union. From Aug. 1 to Election Day, canvassers like her knocked on 500,000 doors in Las Vegas and Reno, according to the union.

used cars. Although popular and outgoing, Biden was afflicted with a persistent stutter, which instilled in him a lifelong hatred of bullies and a belief that even the most stubborn obstacles could be overcome. “My mother’d say, ‘Joey, remember, the greatest virtue of all is courage,’” Biden recalls. “Without it you couldn’t love with abandon. And all other virtues depend on it.”

While other teenagers marched against the Vietnam War, Biden glad-handed around the University of Delaware in a sport coat. He was never the best student or hardest worker, but his charm and talent carried him through law school, a brief stint as a public defender and a seat on the New Castle County council. In 1972, as Harris was being bused to third grade, Biden mounted a long-shot bid for Senate. He courted comparisons to John F. Kennedy: a young, ambitious candidate with a big Irish-Catholic family, a photogenic wife and adorable kids, and a message about bringing a new generation to power. Congress had recently lowered the voting age from 21 to 18, and Biden’s sister Valerie, then as now his closest political adviser, organized a brigade of high schoolers to knock on thousands of doors, lifting the 29-year-old to victory over a two-term incumbent.

Just weeks later, the car carrying Biden’s wife and children on a Christmas shopping excursion was broadsided by a truck. Neilia and their 13-month-old daughter Naomi were killed. Biden’s two sons were badly injured. He came close to quitting the Senate before he was sworn in. “His grief makes him human,” says Moe Vela, a former senior adviser. “And he understands that shared humanity, that shared vulnerability, allows him to connect.”

As a Senator, Biden was rarely behind the times, but rarely ahead of them either. As Judiciary Committee chair, he oversaw the hearings into Anita Hill’s sexual harassment allegations against Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, enraging many for not including public testimony by additional witnesses who could testify to Thomas’ pattern of behavior and for allowing the all-white, all-male committee to bully Hill. He championed the 1994 crime bill, which included both tough new sentencing laws and the Violence Against Women Act. He voted for the Defense of Marriage Act, which defined marriage as between a man and a woman, then, nearly two decades later, upstaged Obama by embracing same-sex marriage before the President did. He was a politician who followed public opinion but did not guide it, an institutionalist who believed in the moderating influence of the Senate almost as much as he believed in his own policy preferences.

He carried that disposition into the vice presidency. Once, when Vela was flying to Chile with Biden on Air Force Two, the aide complained in personal terms about a Republican Senator who was blocking an Obama proposal. Biden grabbed Vela’s left forearm with his right hand, as Vela recalls it, and said, “Moe,



you’re wrong. That’s my friend. We might not agree every time on how to make America better, but we both agree that we want to make America better.” Biden advised younger politicians to criticize their rivals’ policies without impugning them personally. “Once you start attacking people’s character and their motivations, you prevent them from ever being able to get over the policy disagreement you had, and you lose them as someone you can potentially work with,” explains Delaware Senator Chris Coons, a Biden protégé.

Biden went out of his way to help Republicans where he could, once flying to Moscow and back in a single day to join a GOP colleague for a presentation on nuclear weapons. “Joe has a good heart,” says former Republican Senator John Danforth. “He’s got the temperament and the background to reach out and to work with all kinds of people to make government work again.”

Most of all, Biden became famous for his empathy. The stories are legion: how he hugged a grieving child; called a grandmother on the day her grandson was sworn into the Senate; reached out after a car accident, a cancer diagnosis, a death in the family. One former adviser recalled how Biden held up his entourage on the way out of the Executive Office Building to offer heartfelt thanks to a janitor for mopping a spill; another recalls he and Jill always

Biden and Jill, his future wife, met in 1975

sent food to the drivers waiting for them outside. During a photo shoot for this story, Biden asked the photographer, Camila Falquez, to FaceTime her parents. “Hola, Mami!” Falquez said as they came on the screen. “Hey, Dad, how are you?” Biden interjected, briefly pulling down his mask so the pair could see his face. “You guys have a wonderful daughter.”

Although Obama picked him in part because he believed Biden had put his presidential ambitions behind him, Biden toyed with running in 2016. He ultimately decided he wasn’t up to it in the wake of Beau’s death. But in 2017, when white supremacists marched in Charlottesville, Va., he decided he had to get back in the game. “He could not have lived with himself if he hadn’t run after Charlottesville,” says Biden’s longtime adviser Ted Kaufman, who is heading the presidential transition. “If he didn’t run and Trump won, he would have spent the rest of his life feeling he could have beaten Trump.”

AS BIDEN WAS MUSCLING his way through public-speaking requirements at Archmere Academy near Wilmington, in 1958, 19-year-old Shyamala Gopalan arrived in Berkeley to pursue a doctorate in nutrition and endocrinology. She soon realized that she had swapped one caste system for another. While her Tamil Brahman heritage signified her elite status in India, the U.S. was segmented along racial lines. Gopalan joined a Black study group whose discussions on race helped inform the intellectual underpinnings of the Black Power movement. Malcolm X, Che Guevara and Fidel Castro were considered heroes, one of the group’s leaders, Aubrey LaBrie, told TIME last year. It was there that Gopalan met a Jamaican economics student named Donald Harris. They had two daughters, Kamala and Maya, before divorcing when Kamala was 7.

If Biden grew up in an age of American ascendance, Harris came of age in a nation confronting its legacy of injustice. Her parents took her to civil rights marches in a stroller. After their divorce, Kamala and Maya attended an after-school program decorated with images of Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth. Harris has recalled learning about George Washington Carver before she learned about George Washington. In 1970, when she started first grade in Berkeley, Kamala was in one of the first groups of students to be bused to a mostly white school across town in an early local experiment in integration. “Mommy had great expectations for us, but she had even greater expectations of us,” Maya Harris says. “And that sense of responsibility and duty that our mother instilled in us, to leave this world more fair and more just for more people than when we entered it, that sense of responsibility and duty has guided her throughout her life.”

Although she grew up among activists and organizers, Kamala Harris wanted to make change by working within the system, not outside of it. At nearly

BIDEN, IN HIS OWN WORDS

TIME spoke with Biden in Wilmington, Del., on Dec. 7. This excerpt has been edited for clarity and space

ON RESTORING AMERICA'S

MIDDLE CLASS If my plan is able to be implemented—my whole economic plan—I think it’s going to go down as one of the most progressive Administrations in American history. We’ve lost the idea that when ordinary people do well, everybody does better. It’s important that we focus on the things that provide opportunity.

PARDONING DONALD TRUMP My Justice Department will make decisions based on the facts. They’re the people’s lawyers; they’re not my lawyers. I’m never going to pick up the phone and say, “Pardon so-and-so,” or “Go out and prosecute so-and-so.” But I lived through Gerald Ford’s pardoning of Richard Nixon. I think that the law and the circumstance should take its effect. I’m not suggesting [Trump] be prosecuted or not. But I would not be engaged in that prematurely.

HOW THE PANDEMIC HAS CHANGED HIM, AND US What’s been reinforced is my absolute commitment that everyone is entitled to health care. It’s not about whether or not it’s a privilege. It’s a right. We’re the only country in the world that has come out of every crisis stronger than we went into the crisis. I predict we will come out of this crisis stronger than when we went in.

FIGHTING VACCINE HESITANCY The words of a President matter. Whether they’re good Presidents or bad, they matter. I joined the three Presidents who said they would [be publicly vaccinated] because I think people will realize we have to reinstate confidence that science is real. If someone

with the reputation of [Anthony] Fauci and the leading scientists of the country said this vaccine works, they should take it.

CHOOSING KAMALA HARRIS She is straight as an arrow. She is really, really bright. She is tough. But yet she has a heart that understands what it’s like to be on the other side of prejudice. She also was an immigrant’s daughter who was raised, in a strange way, like I was. We were taught that we could be anything. Don’t give up, just move, keep pushing. And I just found her to be someone who if, in fact, something happened to me, I knew they could take over. That’s Kamala.

UNITING A DIVIDED NATION I got widely criticized when I first announced my candidacy [for] saying that we had to not greet Trump with a clenched fist, but with more of an open hand. That we weren’t going to respond to hate with hate. And when George Floyd [was killed], I was cautioned by some really smart people. You know, “Don’t go out and talk about racial inequity; don’t mention it because you’re gonna lose the suburbs.” My argument all along is that the American people aren’t there. The American people are not mean-spirited. They do want to see justice. They want to be united. They want to bring the country together. This is a matter of letting the air out of the balloon a little bit. I think you’re going to see a lot more cooperation than anybody thinks.

WHAT HE'D LIKE PEOPLE TO SAY OF HIM IN FOUR YEARS That America was better off and average Americans are better off the day we left than the day we arrived. That’s my objective.

every station in her career, she broke a barrier. In 2004, she was elected San Francisco DA; six years later, she was elected attorney general of California. The balance between “progressive prosecutor” and “top cop” was a delicate one. She implemented new programs for young nonviolent offenders, yet began enforcing truancy laws by threatening parents with fines if their kids missed school. Even in the 2020 campaign, Harris seemed to be juggling allegiances, down to her campaign slogan, “For the People,” intended to evoke her prosecutorial roots while blurring their controversial connotations.

Like Biden, she had a knack for sensing where the political wind was blowing and sometimes disappointed liberal activists. She sought to uphold questionable convictions, declined to support legislation to reduce low-level felonies to misdemeanors and tried to reinstate the death penalty, even though she claimed to oppose it. At the same time, she earned accolades on the left for taking on oil companies, for-profit colleges and predatory mortgage lenders, and for refusing to defend California’s ban on gay marriage. As a newly minted attorney general in 2011, she pulled out of a national mortgage-foreclosure settlement with five big banks when she felt the approximately \$2 billion allotted for California didn’t give her constituents adequate restitution. Ultimately she procured a \$20 billion settlement. “The fact that she was an AG and had her fingers on every aspect of governance in California will help her in every role she takes in the federal government,” says Doug Gansler, a former Maryland attorney general who served with her during this time.

Harris arrived in the Senate in 2017, the first Indian American in its history. Already a political celebrity, she impressed colleagues as much with her infectious laugh as with her ruthless probing of witnesses. Then—Attorney General Jeff Sessions complained that her rapid-fire questions made him “nervous”; she reduced the current Attorney General, Bill Barr, to stammering when she asked if the White House had ever asked his Justice Department to investigate anyone. In September 2018, her calm but pointed grilling of Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh went viral, enhancing her reputation on the left.

Harris played an integral role in that year’s bipartisan criminal-justice legislation and co-sponsored the liberal Green New Deal. Though she built a reputation as a serious policymaker, she never carved out a signature issue and seemed to elude ideological definition. She spent just two years in the Senate before launching her bid for President.

AFTER CLINCHING THE NOMINATION, Biden set to uniting his party. He won Sanders’ endorsement, solicited advice from Senator Elizabeth Warren and invited well-known progressives to offer policy ideas. “Biden’s ability to hold the party together can’t be



Harris with her younger sister Maya and mother Shyamala Gopalan in 1968

WHAT SHE BRINGS

Kamala Harris is a first. But she stands on a solid foundation

By Anna Deavere Smith

ON AUG. 11, MANY OF US WERE WAITING WITH CONSIDERABLE suspense to find out whom Joe Biden would pick to be his running mate. A video that shows him calling Kamala Harris goes like this:

Biden: All right.

We see him taking off his mask. Then we hear Harris’ voice on the line.

Harris: Hi! Hi! Hi! Hi! Sorry to keep you.

Biden: No, that’s all right. You ready to go to work?

There is silence. About three seconds of absolute silence.

Harris: Oh my God. I’m so ready to go to work.

Biden: First of all, is the answer yes?

Harris: The answer is absolutely yes, Joe. And I am ready to work.

WHEN KAMALA HARRIS becomes the Vice President of the United States in January, she will be, as has been frequently noted, a first—the first woman, the first Black person and the first Indian-American person to hold this office. But while it is worth celebrating that the top leadership of the U.S. will better mirror its people, it is important to remember that simply naming these identities does not tell us all we need to know. It’s within the particulars of her lived experience as a Black and Indian-American woman that we can truly understand who she is today and what she brings with her to the White House.

Harris writes in her memoir *The Truths We Hold* that her mother, who grew up in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, “understood very well that she was raising two black daughters.” Harris’ now well-worn narrative includes little about her father, who moved to the U.S. from Jamaica and acquired a Ph.D. in economics from the University of California, Berkeley. Shyamala Gopalan and Donald Harris fell in love as civil rights activists and divorced when the future VP was 7, and Gopalan got custody of Harris and her sister Maya. Harris mentions spending summers with her father in Palo Alto, Calif., where he became a tenured professor of economics at Stanford in the 1970s, no small feat for a Black man. “The Farm,” the “Harvard of the West,” still had only a handful of Black faculty when I became tenured there in the ’90s—I cannot imagine what it would have been like to be Black and on the tenure track in the ’70s.

But it is her mother, a noted cancer researcher, who is frequently evoked as Harris’ influence and inspiration. “When she came here from India at the age of 19, she maybe didn’t quite imagine this moment,” Harris said in her victory speech on Nov. 7. “But she believed so deeply in an America where a moment like this is possible.” And that she came at all is thanks largely to Harris’ grandfather P.V. Gopalan, a civil servant in India. The history of South Asian activists’ struggle for independence is rich and the movement’s solidarity with the fight for civil rights in the U.S. runs deep; Harris has talked of walking the beaches of Besant Nagar with her grandfather, her pen pal in those aerogram pre-email days, and being inspired as a girl by the passion he had for democracy. Still, it’s worth noting that although Harris is “for the people,” she is not “of the people.” When we speak of her as the first Indian-American Vice President of the United States, we should also acknowledge that she comes into this position with at least some level of privilege. Her family is Brahman, the most elite caste in India.

Harris is a highly educated and accomplished woman, but she is hardly the only one in her family. In an interview with an Indian newscaster after the election, Dr. Sarala Gopalan, Harris’ aunt, or *chitti*, explained that sending Shyamala to the U.S. was not something you would expect from a South Indian in 1958. But their father believed that women should be educated. “When she became a Senator, I went and told her, ‘Kamala, you are a diamond in the family,’” said Sarala Gopalan, a gynecologist, “and she just said to me, ‘Chitti, I am not a diamond, I am a diamond amongst diamonds in the family.’”

Dr. Radhika Balakrishnan, faculty director of the Center for Women’s Global Leadership at Rutgers University, points to another sign of how progressive Harris’ grandfather must have been.

“The racism against Black people in India and the colorism in India is enormous and pervasive throughout the country, including in Tamil Nadu,” she explains. And yet he not only accepted but embraced his granddaughters, proud Black American women.

ON THE DAY of George Floyd’s first funeral service, Harris gave an impassioned speech on the Senate floor. Senator Rand Paul had just held up the anti-lynching bill she had introduced with Senators Cory Booker and Tim Scott, the only other Black members of the Senate, and she stood to take issue with this affront. “It should not require a maiming or torture in order for us to recognize a lynching when we see it and recognize it by federal law and call it what it is, which is that it is a crime that should be punishable with accountability and consequence,” she said. “So it is remarkable and it is painful to be standing here right now, especially when people of all races are marching in the streets of America, outraged by the hate and the violence and the murder that has been fueled by racism during the span of this country’s life.”

Her speech, in which she quoted anti-lynching pioneer Ida B. Wells, also drew on her history. As a student at Howard, a historically Black university, Harris joined Alpha Kappa Alpha, the first Black Greek sorority. AKA was started in 1908 by Ethel Hedgeman, and from the outset, the sisters believed it was their duty to “raise up Negroes.” In the 1930s, they started both an education program and a rural health program in Mississippi. In the early 20th century, one of the sorority’s projects was pushing anti-lynching legislation. After around 200 attempts, which ceased in the 1960s, legislation did not pass in Congress. Nearly 60 years later, Harris joined Booker and Scott in picking up the mantle by co-authoring the Justice for Victims of Lynching Act, which was later renamed the Emmett Till Antilynching Act. And in doing so, Harris continued the tradition of Black women working for the betterment of all humankind.

These are just a few examples of how examining Harris’ specific experiences and relationships—different from those of the past and present occupants of high office—may yield a deeper understanding of the woman who just made history. But they are a reminder that the U.S. will not only have its first Vice President who is a Black and Indian-American woman, as important as those milestones are. Harris is standing on a firm foundation of service, courage, struggle, passion, intellectual rigor and hope. She is indeed ready to go to work.

Smith is an award-winning playwright, actor and NYU professor

HARRIS, IN HER OWN WORDS

TIME spoke with Harris in Wilmington, Del., on Dec. 7. This excerpt has been edited for clarity and space

WHAT SHE WANTS TO DO FIRST

There's a lot, to be honest. We're talking about a public-health crisis that has killed hundreds of thousands of people, has infected tens of millions. We are in the midst of an economic crisis that's being compared to the Great Depression. A long overdue reckoning on racial injustice. And a climate crisis. We have to be able to multitask, just like any parent or any human being does.

ABOUT JOE BIDEN I can tell you many things about him with admiration and respect, including that Joe asked me to be his running mate because he understands that we have different life experiences. But he also knows—and I know, and it's a point of pride for me—that we have an incredible amount of shared experiences and values. We were both raised in strong, hardworking families. We're grounded in faith. We both have spent our entire careers in public service. I think that's what makes ours a very full and very robust partnership.

GETTING THE CALL My team got a call that the [former] Vice President would like to speak to you. The anxiety, the tension was high. What was this call gonna be? Instead of going on as some might with their involvement with themselves, immediately [Joe] said, "So, you want to do this?" He just got right to the point. That's who Joe is. There's no pomp and circumstance with him. He's a straight shooter.

WHY BIDEN AND HARRIS WON The country wanted a leader who pledged their ability to heal and to build a broad coalition. The American people said, "Let's

move forward. Let's understand that regardless of where you live, your race, your ethnicity, the language your grandmother speaks, let's move forward knowing that the vast majority of us have more in common than what separates us." It's about basic stuff. Can I get a job? Are my kids gonna have the opportunity for an education that allows them to reach their God-given capacity? I think that's what people want as we move forward. And I think that's what the American people got.

RESTORING 'THE SOUL OF THE NATION' Our souls will be well when people know that they can feed their children. When they know that they can have a job that allows them to not only pay the bills by the end of the month, but to have a sense of dignity, in terms of knowing they're providing for their families and creating a pathway for their future possibilities. The soul of the nation is well when people don't have to worry about whether they can afford their medical bills, or whether they'll go bankrupt because they have a family member that's sick. It's these basic things that should be considered human rights, frankly, civil rights.

ON BEING FIRST It is one of my responsibilities. My mother had many sayings. She would say, "Kamala, you may be the first to do many things; make sure you're not the last." Which is why [in my victory speech] I said, "I will be the first, but I will not be the last." And that's about legacy, that's about creating a pathway, that's about leaving the door more open than it was when you walked in.

overstated," says veteran Democratic admaker Jim Margolis, who worked for Harris during the primary. "That was an impossible task for Hillary Clinton in 2016. In 2020, it was the name of the game."

Biden's political instincts were tested over and over, starting with the summer's racial-justice protests. Trump was using images of urban riots to associate his rivals with chaos and lawlessness, even embracing vigilantes and far-right militias as symbols of a racist pro-police "law and order" message. Neither Biden nor Harris had been the first choice of racial-justice organizers. To some activists on the left, the idea of reconciliation smacked of weakness. "You call it unity, I call it capitulation," says Alicia Garza, co-founder of Black Lives Matter and principal at the Black Futures Lab.

Biden sought a middle course. He knelt alongside activists, proposed substantive reforms to address structural racism and embraced the Black Lives Matter mantra. But he rejected calls to "defund the police" and denounced violence and the destruction of property. "I was cautioned by some really smart people. You know, 'Don't go out and talk about racial inequity,'" Biden says. "'Don't mention it because you're gonna lose the suburbs.'" He ignored them, believing the country had changed since President Richard Nixon's coded appeals to the racial consciousness of the "silent majority." "I think the American people are better and more decent than that," Biden says.

To knock off an incumbent President for just the 10th time in American history, Biden and Harris had to revive the party's fading strength with white voters without college degrees; energize its emerging base of diverse, urban young voters; and motivate the hordes of angry suburbanites, particularly college graduates and women, who had fled the Trump-era GOP. None of these constituencies would be enough to carry the Electoral College on its own, and leaning too far into any one of them risked alienating another.

Biden was perhaps the only Democratic candidate who could claw back some of the party's lost ground with the culturally conservative white voters who dominate the swing states of the Rust Belt. Harris, meanwhile, brought a cultural competency that attracted the next generation of Democrats, right down to her footwear. When she stepped out of a plane in Chuck Taylor sneakers, many voters saw a politician who had literally walked miles in their shoes. Harris' candidacy was especially meaningful to the Black women who form the backbone of the Democratic Party, and whose turnout was critical in flipping key states. "The electorate is continuing to change, and that demographic change is the story of this election," says Henry Fernandez, CEO of the African American Research Collaborative. "It's reflected in Kamala Harris."

On election night, Biden was at home in

Wilmington; 13 members of his family had individually quarantined beforehand in order to watch the returns come in together. Campaign staff gathered in front of a huge screen at the Chase Center nearby. Advisers downplayed the chance of a quick victory. Still, some Democrats panicked early in the night, fearing Trump's strength in Florida foreshadowed a repeat of 2016. Biden allies reassured supporters that mail ballots would ultimately erase Trump's lead, but many were anxious. "I sure went to bed depressed," says longtime donor John Morgan.

Most of the Biden brain trust didn't go to bed at all. Every hour or two, they were briefed by the campaign's analytics director, Becca Siegel, who assured them Biden was getting the numbers he needed. "The mood was not dire or panicky," says Bedingfield. "It was more like the agony of waiting and waiting for something that you know is coming." For the next four days, the Bidens were "like every other family in America: we were glued to the TV," Jill Biden recalls.

When the networks finally called the race on Nov. 7, Joe and Jill were away from the television, sitting on lawn chairs in the backyard. All of a sudden loud cheers broke the silence, and their grandchildren came running, shouting, "Pop won!" Once inside, Biden's first call was to Harris.

Harris saw the news after coming back from a run in Delaware. She rushed back outside to find Emhoff to tell him, and that's when she got the call from the President-elect. As the streets erupted in celebration, her sister Maya came over for a lunch of bagels and lox, with a plate of bacon to share. For millions across America, it was the dawn of a new era after four years of vexation and strife; for the sisters, watching footage of revelers gathering in front of the little yellow apartment in Berkeley where they grew up, it was as if time had stopped. "We kind of had this brief moment where everything was bursting all around us, but we could just sit for a bit and take it all in before plunging into what was about to become this imminent new, big reality," Maya says.

Even now, friends say, that reality hasn't quite sunk in. Harris' longtime adviser Minyon Moore says she keeps asking: "Do you know you're the Vice President yet?" And Harris replies, "No, not really, but I'm trying."

ALL NEW PRESIDENTS inherit messes from their predecessors, but Biden is the first to have to think about literally decontaminating the White House. Combatting the pandemic is only the start of the challenge, at home and abroad. There are alliances to rebuild, a stimulus package to pass, a government to staff. Biden's advisers are preparing a slew of Executive Orders: restoring the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals immigration program, rejoining the Paris Agreement, reversing the so-called Muslim ban and more. Biden's "Build Back Better" plan aims to revitalize the

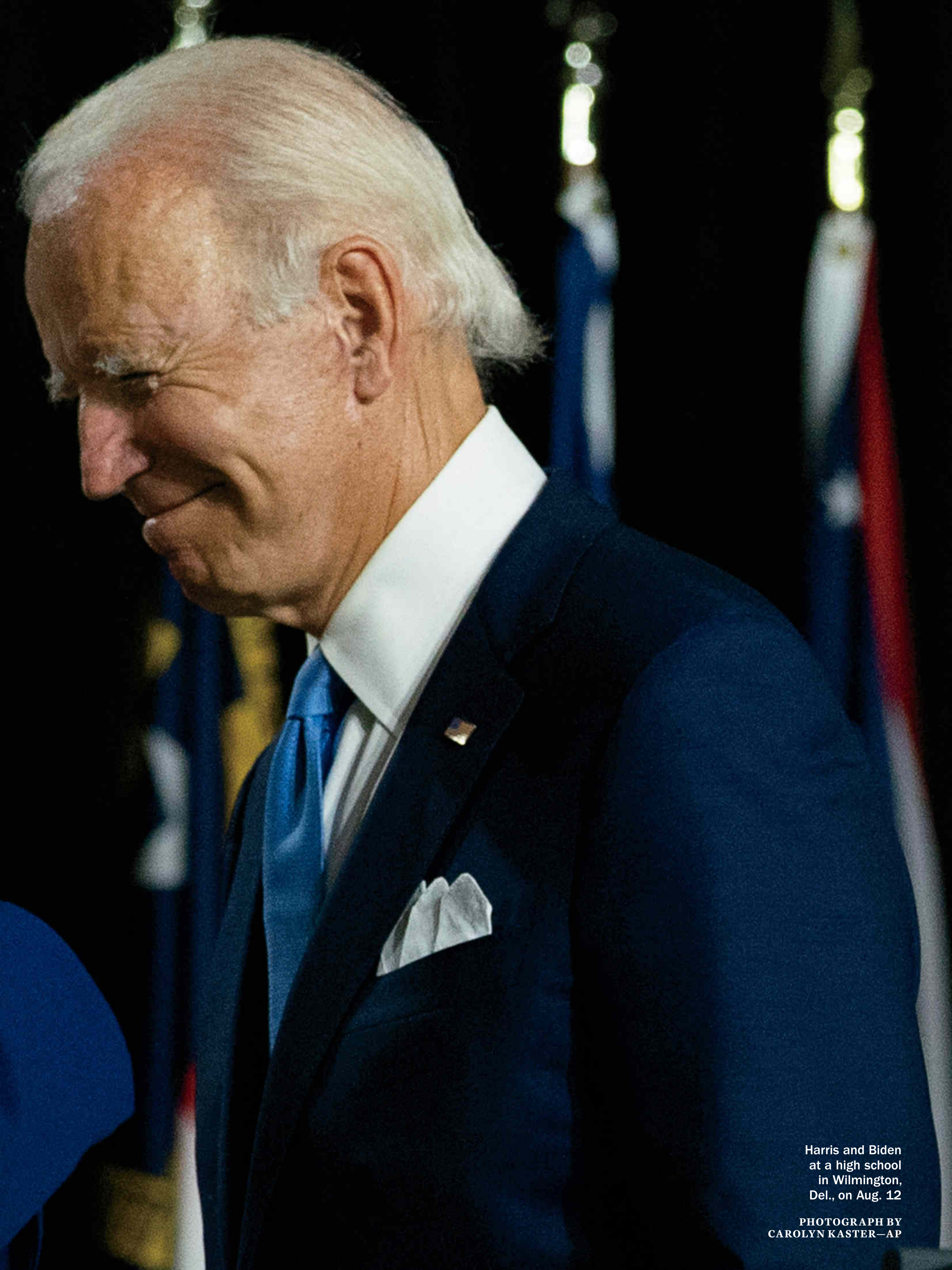
virus-wracked economy—which some analysts say is unlikely to fully recover until 2023—by investing in infrastructure, education and childcare. "I think if my plan is able to be implemented," Biden says, "it's gonna go down as one of the most progressive Administrations in American history."

Much of what Biden hopes to do, from Cabinet appointments to legislation, will have to pass a more divided Senate than the one he left a dozen years ago. If Republicans win at least one of Georgia's two Senate seats in Jan. 5 runoffs, the fate of his agenda will be in the hands of Republican majority leader Mitch McConnell, who, like most GOP members of Congress, has refused even to acknowledge his victory. Biden's relationships and peace offerings may not be worth much in this climate, says his friend William Cohen, a former GOP Senator. Republicans "will be watching not him but Donald Trump, and acting just as much out of fear of [Trump] in the future as they have in the past." As in the campaign, the GOP is likely to amplify controversy surrounding Biden's son Hunter, who on Dec. 9 released a statement acknowledging his tax affairs are under investigation by the U.S. Attorney's office in Delaware.

For now, Biden and Harris are busy building a team in a well-ordered sequence, starting with senior White House staff and progressing through clusters of appointments—first foreign policy, then economic officials, then health advisers, and so on. The Biden-Harris Administration is on track to be one of the most diverse in the nation's history, though it doesn't go far enough for some. Their relationship has continued to deepen. "The thing that I love that I've observed: it's not stiff, it's natural," Jill Biden says. "They're friends already, and the trust can only continue to grow." Biden's big jobs as Vice President—from selling the Recovery Act to negotiating budget deals with McConnell—tended to land in his lap, and he expects it will be similar for Harris, who has not yet announced a dedicated portfolio. To millions, the symbolism of Harris' role is nearly as important as the substance. "What she's projecting is America—it has risen just one more time," Moore says.

Even if Trump still captivates a broad swath of the country, the President-elect believes the rancor will fade as Trump exits stage right. The next few months will be "letting the air out of the balloon," says Biden. "I think you're gonna see a lot more cooperation than anybody thinks." Until then, he and Harris are polishing their scripts and rehearsing their lines inside the Queen. They have just six weeks to prepare. On Jan. 20, the lights will come up, and the show will go on. —*With reporting by* ALANA ABRAMSON, BRIAN BENNETT, VERA BERGENGRUEN, MADELEINE CARLISLE, LESLIE DICKSTEIN, ALEJANDRO DE LA GARZA, SIMMONE SHAH, LISSANDRA VILLA, OLIVIA B. WAXMAN *and* JULIA ZORTHIAN 





Harris and Biden
at a high school
in Wilmington,
Del., on Aug. 12

PHOTOGRAPH BY
CAROLYN KASTER—AP

16.8 million bottles of hand sanitizer

23.4 million diapers

127.1 million bags of pet food

403.5 million rolls of toilet paper

1.6 billion grocery items

**1 million Amazon associates and
partners who worked to get these
essentials to you this year.**



To them, our countless thanks.



Guardians



DR. ANTHONY FAUCI AND FRONTLINE HEALTH WORKERS

GUARDIANS PUT THEMSELVES ON THE LINE TO DEFEND THE ideals sacred to democracy. In 2020, they fought on many fronts. In Washington, Dr. Anthony Fauci led not only the battle against COVID-19 but also the fight for truth—clear, consistent messaging being fundamental to public health. With steadfast integrity, Fauci nudged, elided and gently corrected a President used to operating in a reality of his own construction, buoyed by the fervent repetition of lies.

On the front line against COVID-19, the world's health care workers displayed the best of humanity—selflessness, compassion, stamina, courage—while protecting as much of it as they could. By risking their lives every day for the strangers who arrived at their workplace, they made conspicuous a foundational principle of both

of the Year



RACIAL-JUSTICE ORGANIZERS

medicine and democracy: equality. By their example, health care workers this year guarded more than lives.

The shared experience of watching George Floyd die was proof, if anyone needed it, that Black lives are still not treated as equal in America. In the wake of Floyd's killing surged a wave of outrage that was harnessed by organizers, both veteran and newly energized, to bring millions to the streets and spotlight the inequities in a world that claims to be far better than it is. The movement for racial justice found its voice in multitudes: a mother in Kenosha delivering her frank report to Joe Biden; a sister in Paris calling for police accountability in her brother's death. If the truth they guard—lived truth—can bolster the structures of the society that emerges from the trauma of this extraordinary year, it might also redeem it. —KARL VICK





CARRYING THE LOAD

Dr. Sherry Melton, center, moves a gurney after transferring a COVID-19 patient to the ICU at Lincoln Medical Center in the Bronx on April 3, when New York was the U.S. epicenter of the pandemic

PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIP MONTGOMERY

DR. ANTHONY FAUCI

In the face of those who sought to undermine facts, he fought for science

By Alice Park

MOST 79-YEAR-OLDS DON'T GET UNSOLICITED phone calls about brand-new job opportunities. But few people of any age have Dr. Anthony Fauci's résumé, or stamina. When Joe Biden called Fauci on Dec. 3 for their first conversation since the election, the President-elect asked him to stay on as director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, a position he's held for 36 years—and to serve as chief medical adviser to the new Administration. "I said, 'Mr. President-elect, of course I will do that; are you kidding me?'" Fauci recalls a day later in an interview with TIME.

And true to form, Fauci, who has guided the U.S. through HIV, H1N1, SARS, MERS, Ebola and Zika, was immediately on the job. During the 15-minute call, Biden solicited Fauci's advice about what has become a point of contention between public-health experts and the outgoing Trump Administration: the role of masks in controlling the COVID-19 pandemic. Biden said once he was inaugurated, he planned to announce a 100-day nationwide mask-wearing policy, as a way to tamp down the rising wave of coronavirus cases. It's something Fauci has urged but President Trump never supported. Fauci agreed with the idea, as well as Biden's proposal for limited mask mandates, starting with those who work on and use public transportation like buses, trains and subways.

"He is one of the most universally admired infectious-disease experts in the world," Dr. Howard Koh, a professor at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and former Assistant Secretary for Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, says of Fauci. "For the health of our country and the world right now, he needs to be front and center every day."

THAT MIGHT SEEM like a given during such a public-health crisis, but over the past year, experts like Fauci were forced to battle not just a new virus but also a President who assaulted scientific facts for political gain. Week after week, as Donald Trump commandeered pandemic press briefings and turned to social media, first to downplay the extent of the disease and paint a rosier-than-reality picture of the U.S. response, and then to espouse unproven or even dangerous "treatments," the voices of public-health experts became harder to hear.

Throughout those weeks, Fauci took every opportunity to keep those voices from going silent, even as his own was turning raspier from his constant media appearances, press briefings and private meetings with Administration health officials. The world watched as Fauci conducted a master class in scientific diplomacy, witnessing in real time how his understanding about the virus changed as science tried to keep up with the pandemic, and how he deftly adjusted and refined public-health messages as that knowledge grew. We watched as Fauci held live demonstrations on how to stay true to the facts in the face of those who seek to undermine them.

In July, after Trump touted hydroxychloroquine as a COVID-19 treatment, Fauci noted that no rigorous studies showed the malaria drug was effective against the virus. During a Senate hearing in September, Fauci strongly disagreed with Senator Rand Paul's suggestion that natural herd immunity—achieved by allowing the virus to infect a population so more people can develop immunity—was a reasonable solution to the pandemic. Most U.S. public-health experts never entertained this as a viable pandemic-control strategy because it's too risky for people's health. "You've misconstrued that, Senator, and you've done that repeatedly in the past," Fauci said.

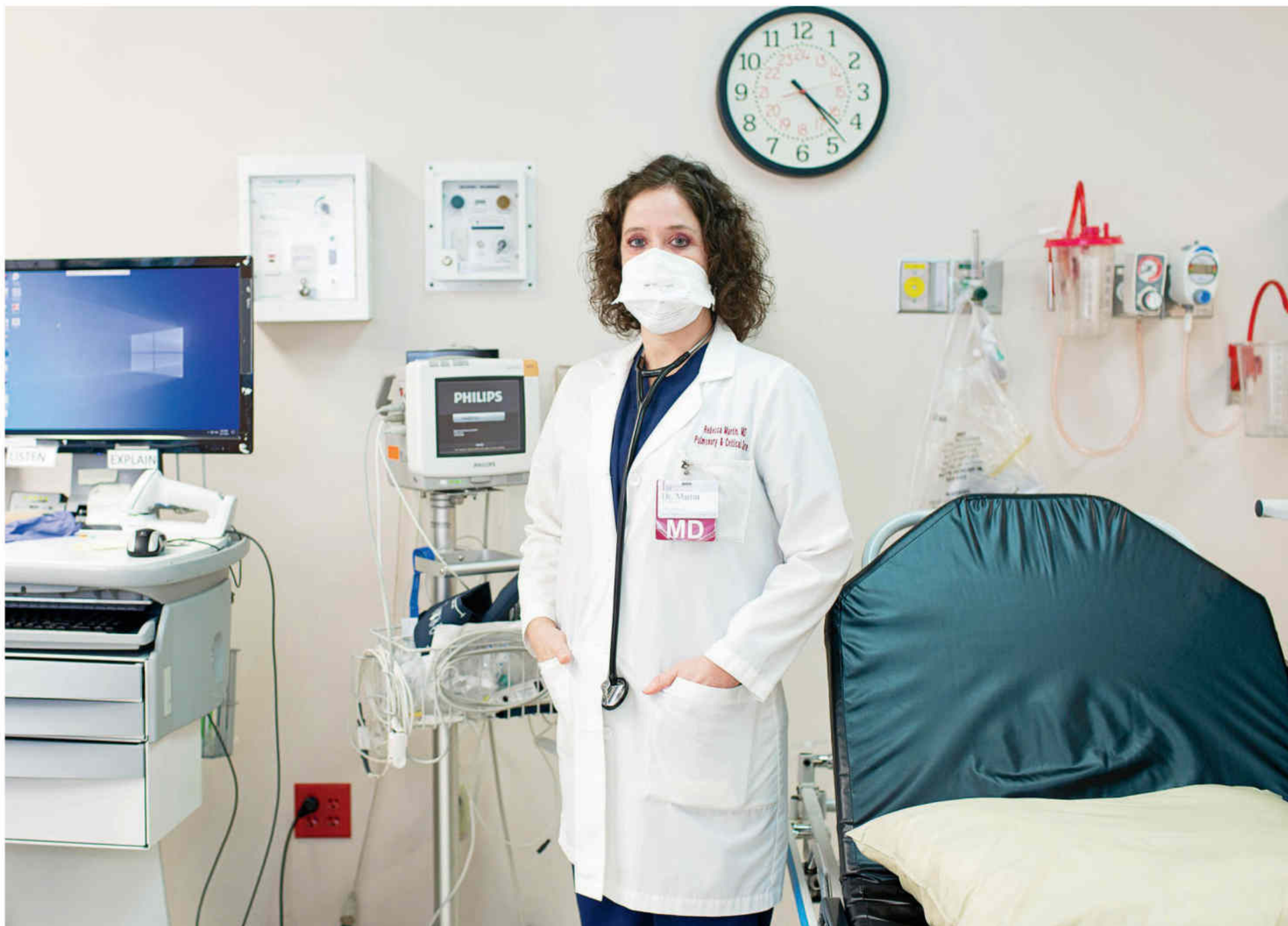
He saved his strongest rebuke for a Trump reelection campaign ad, which took something Fauci had said about the work of the coronavirus task force on which he serves to imply that Fauci approved of Trump's pandemic response. Fauci immediately countered the idea that he would endorse any political candidate, and said the quotes were taken out of context. "I really got pissed off because I am so meticulous about not getting involved in favoring any political group or person or being part of any kind of political thing," he says.

As he continued to defend the facts and just the facts, Fauci became a household name. Today, he is both a symbol of scientific integrity and a target of frustration, criticism and even violent threats by those who blame him for the school closures, job losses and deaths of loved ones from COVID-19. But he is keenly aware that both the hero worship and the scapegoating are a consequence of his becoming a stand-in for the complex fallout of the pandemic. He has continued to oversee the basic research that has now led to an approved drug and two COVID-19 vaccines that could start being distributed to the public by Christmas.

And he doesn't plan on stepping down anytime soon. "I'm not even thinking of walking away from this," Fauci says. "You train as an infectious-disease person and you're involved in public health like I am, if there is one challenge in your life you cannot walk away from, it is the most impactful pandemic in the last 102 years." —*With reporting by* MADELINE ROACHE/LONDON □



Dr. Anthony Fauci,
photographed in
Bethesda, Md.,
on Dec. 4



2020 Guardians of the Year

FRONTLINE HEALTH WORKERS

During a crisis like no other, they put their lives on the line to keep all of us safe

By Jeffrey Kluger

HUMAN BEINGS DON'T ALWAYS DO SELFLESSNESS well—and in some respects, there's no reason we should. We've got the one life, the one go-round, the one chance to work and play and thrive and look after ourselves and our own. That doesn't make for a generous, self-denying species; it makes for a grasping, needy, greedy one. And that's exactly how we behave. Until we don't.

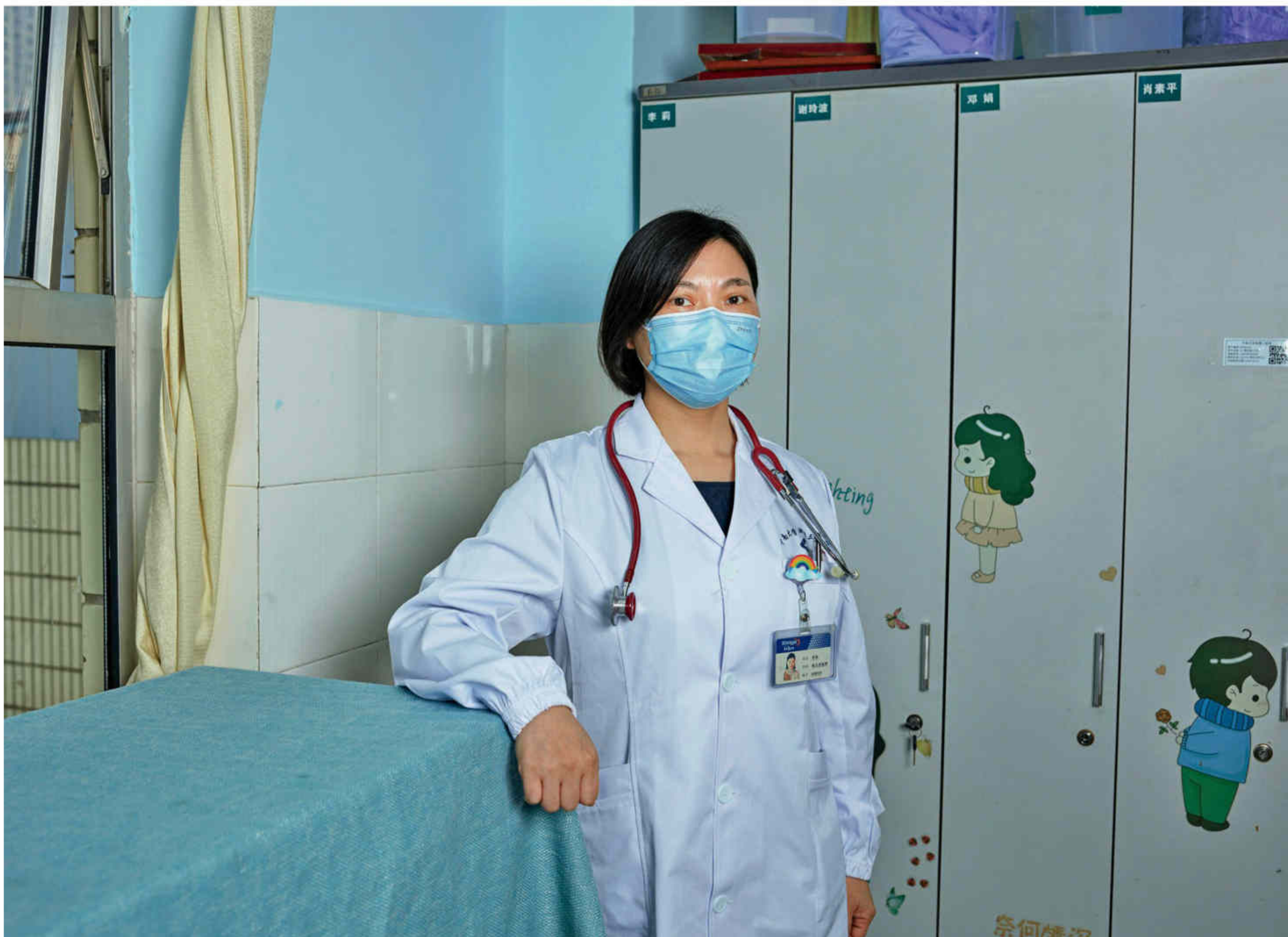
Evolution may code for self-interest first, but it codes for other things too—for kindness, for empathy, for compassion. There's a reason we rise up to defend the suffering, to comfort those in sorrow, to gather in the sick and afflicted. And this year—as the coronavirus pandemic burned its deadly path around the world—we've risen and comforted and

gathered in ways we rarely have before.

The global mobilization to defeat the pandemic has been led by doctors, policymakers, heads of state and more—most notably in the U.S. by Dr. Anthony Fauci, who has been a face and voice of gentle empathy and hard truths. But there are only so many leaders, and a widely available vaccine remains months away. Since COVID-19 first appeared last December in Wuhan, China, this has thus been a more personal, more intimate effort, one conducted patient by patient, bedside by bedside, by uncounted, often anonymous caregivers: pulmonologists, EMTs, school nurses, home health workers, nursing-home staff, community organizers running testing sites, health workers from regions where case counts were low who packed up and raced to places the pandemic was spiking.

"I've gotta go," 44-year-old pulmonologist Dr. Rebecca Martin of Mountain Hope, Ark., recalls thinking back in the spring as she watched media coverage of the crisis that was gripping New York City. Martin caught a nearly empty flight to New York, landed in what amounted to a ghost town—no people on the sidewalks, no cars on the roads—and made her way to Wyckoff Heights Medical Center in Brooklyn to volunteer her services.

"I[d] never practiced medicine outside of Arkansas," she says. "It was terrifying. There was so much we didn't know about COVID-19." Back home



now, Martin is fighting the U.S.'s third wave in her own hospital, Baxter Regional Medical Center, working 12- to 14-hour days. "We will take care of our community," she says simply.

Often, taking care of the community has meant not taking care of the self. "I saw more people die this year than I probably saw in the last 10 or 15 years of my career," says Dr. Alan Roth, 60, chairman of the department of family medicine at Jamaica Hospital Medical Center in Queens, N.Y. Roth contracted the disease back in March and is now suffering from long-hauler syndrome—experiencing crushing fatigue months after the acute phase of the disease passed. But he is standing his post as the third wave crashes over the nation. "I've worked seven days a week for many years of my life, but I never have been as physically and emotionally washed out as I am now," he says.

All over the world, there have been similar displays of dedication, of sacrifice. It hasn't been health care workers alone who have carried that burden. Teachers, food-service workers, pharmacy employees and others running essential businesses have all done heroic work. But it is the members of the health community who have led the push—taking on the job when the pandemic was new and they were hailed as heroes—with evening cheers from a grateful public. Now the cheers have largely stopped, the public is fatigued, and the frontline workers themselves are sometimes even resented—

REBECCA MARTIN

Pulmonologist, left; Mountain Home, Ark.

Early in the spring, Martin flew to New York to assist when the city was the nation's coronavirus hot spot. Back in Arkansas, she is now battling the disease in her own hospital. "We will take care of our community," she says.

LIU CHUN

Respiratory doctor, above; Changsha, China

Liu and 129 other doctors at her hospital volunteered to travel to Wuhan in early February when it was the COVID-19 epicenter. Volunteers wept in fear on the flight to Wuhan, and one, fearing he might die from the virus, wrote out a will.

seen as somehow responsible for the prohibitions and constrained lives we've all had to live. But the workers are pressing on all the same—bone-tired maybe, but smarter and tougher. Their stories are all different. Their courage is shared.

WHEN HER PHONE RANG in March, Ornella Calderone, a 33-year-old medical graduate in Turin, Italy, had a feeling the call would change her life. Italy was then the global epicenter of what the World Health Organization had just declared a pandemic, and Calderone offered her services to a hospital in Cremona, one of the country's hot spots. The call was from the hospital telling her she was very much needed. Two days later, she was in the thick of the fight, working in the pulmonology ward with other novice doctors, tending to COVID-19 patients in critical condition.

"We were forced to absorb the concepts in a very short time, to learn everything right away," she says. One thing they learned fast was how to offer succor—not just to treat the sick, but also to comfort them. "I would take their hand while they were speaking to me, and everything changed," she says. "They held on tight, almost a reflexive action, like babies do."

Calderone returned to Turin in June, after the first wave ended; today she works in a local facility that was once a nursing home but was converted to a COVID-19 hospital when the disease crested again

PETE SANDS

Community relief
organizer; Montezuma
Creek, Utah

Sands has organized
free COVID-19
testing, as well as
food, firewood and
water delivery, for
the Navajo Nation
reservation.



ARCHANA GHUGARE
Community health
worker; Pavnar,
Maharashtra, India

Ghugare works 12-hour
days, for meager pay,
identifying COVID-19
cases in her rural
area and helping find
treatment for patients.



this autumn. “This second wave is even more difficult than the first,” she says. “There is much more exhaustion.” Still, she says, she has no regrets. “When I wake up and open my eyes, I know I have a role.”

Archana Ghugare faces not just fatigue but also economic hardship as a result of her commitment to battling the virus. A 41-year-old community health worker in India’s western state of Maharashtra, she is part of a 1 million-strong all-female force known as Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs)—workers serving as a conduit between rural communities and the broader public-health system. She worked five to six hours a day as an ASHA before the pandemic. When the disease first hit, that stretched to 12 hours—and required that she sacrifice more than time. The government paid a monthly COVID-19 bonus of just 1,000 rupees, or about \$13.50—enough for two weeks of groceries for Ghugare’s family of four—which did not make up for what she had been earning from other part-time jobs, or her husband’s income when he lost his job as well.

“It feels like there is a sword over our heads,” Ghugare says. Things improved in October when the COVID-19 caseload began to fall and she could return to her part-time work. But with the recent November spike in infections, the government has asked the ASHAs to be on standby, likely putting Ghugare back in the fight. “We are told we have the respect of millions around the country for the work we do,” she says. “But respect won’t fill our stomachs.”

IF THE PANDEMIC has spared no part of the world and no portion of the population, it has nonetheless exhibited a special animus for the elderly and the housebound. That has pressed a whole population of workers into emergency service. Tanya Lynne Robinson, 56, is a home health aide in Cleveland, caring for people too old or sickly to venture outside—and thus performing her service in near invisibility.

“We do our job every day without people saying thank you,” she says. “We’re the forgotten heroes, the underpaid heroes.” Early in the pandemic they were also the underprotected heroes. The agency that employs Robinson had only limited PPE for its workers, and in her case that was especially dangerous. Suffering from asthma and multiple sclerosis, she is at risk of contracting a severe case of COVID-19.

All the same, even before the third wave of the pandemic hit, she redoubled her commitment to battling it. In September, she became a certified nurse’s aide and is planning to take online courses to become a licensed practical nurse as well. “I’m prepared to do whatever I need to do,” she says.

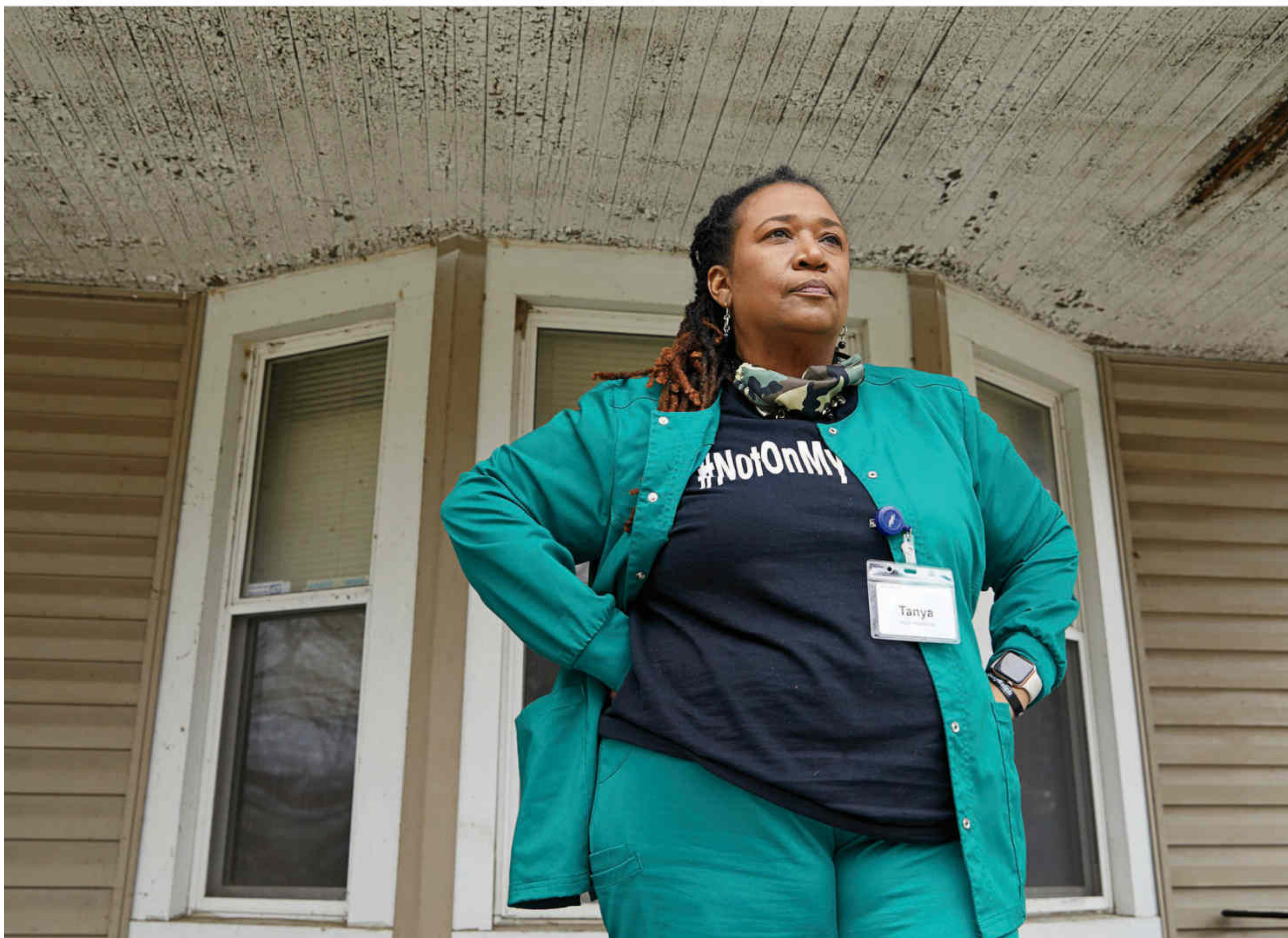
Home health aides like Robinson have not been alone in receiving too little recognition. Take Sabrina Hopps, 47, a housekeeping supervisor who works 10½ hours a day in a Washington, D.C., intensive-care unit, sanitizing patients’ rooms. It is Hopps

and workers like her who disinfect light switches, bed rails, call buttons, side tables and ventilator machines. It is Hopps and others like her who, because of U.S. health-insurance privacy requirements, may not even know if a patient whose room they are cleaning has COVID-19. And it is Hopps and those like her who have become among the patients’ few human contacts. “Just having a conversation with a patient, that will make their day better, on top of yours,” she says. And as for those patients on ventilators who can’t talk at all? “I have learned to read lips,” she says.

Then too there is the staff of the SharonBrooke assisted-living facility in Licking County, Ohio, who not only tend to their elderly patients but also moved in with them for 65 days early in the pandemic and 30 more later in the summer. The reason: if they all quarantined together, they could minimize the chance a staffer could contract the virus on the outside and transmit it to the vulnerable population within.

It wasn’t easy. The staff showered in shifts, did their laundry only on assigned days, and gave up the simple privilege of sleeping in their own beds and seeing their families. “It was kind of like we





were in college again,” Amy Twyman, the assisted-living facility’s executive director, says. The result of the voluntary quarantine? As of this writing, there have been more than 350,000 COVID-19 cases and 72,000 deaths in U.S. nursing homes—but not a single SharonBrooke resident or active employee has contracted the virus.

Concerns that schools, like nursing homes, would become viral danger zones left the country’s more than 13,000 school districts scrambling to figure out all manner of home and hybrid learning systems on the fly. That has posed special challenges for school nurses like Shelah McMillan, 46, who works at the Rudolph Blankenburg School in Philadelphia, as well as in the emergency room of the city’s Einstein Medical Center. With her school district having gone to fully remote learning, McMillan worries that a vital piece of the children’s medical care is going missing.

“We bridge the gap between the medical community and the families,” she says. “When you’re in the building, you get to see your children and you get to know your frequent fliers, and you get to hug your babies. Now you can’t see them, and it’s harder to track.” Still, tracking her babies she is, creating a phone number to field calls and texts from parents, and answering questions about the pandemic and individual students’ health. When she doesn’t hear from parents, she reaches out on her own.

Since the spring, McMillan has also worked with

the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium, which provides free testing in African-American communities in Philadelphia that have been hardest hit by the virus. According to U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention figures from Nov. 30, Black Americans are at 1.4 times greater risk of contracting COVID-19 than white non-Hispanics; among Hispanic communities, the risk is 1.7 times greater. Both groups are at 2.8 times greater risk of death from the disease than white people. Income disparities and lack of access to health care facilities and insurance are all drivers of the inequality. McMillan and others have been doing what they can to bring health—and equity—to these communities.

For all the frontline workers have done to protect and serve, too many of them have been feeling increasingly underappreciated. Jim Gentile, 64, a surgical-services nurse at St. Mary Medical Center in Langhorne, Pa., is part of a staff that has seen its patient count explode during pandemic peaks. Gentile considers the ideal patient-to-nurse ratio 3 to 1, but in recent months that has often spiked to 6 or 7 to 1.

“It was taxing physically to say the very least, and it was emotionally taxing because they were dying right and left. I wrapped more bodies in two months than I did in 25 years,” Gentile says of the spring. “You have to steel yourself. You fall apart on your way home in the car. You fall apart in the shower. And 12 hours later, you’re back in the show again.”

TANYA LYNNE ROBINSON

Home health aide, above; Cleveland

With asthma and multiple sclerosis, Robinson is at higher risk of contracting a severe case of COVID-19. Nonetheless, she continues to tend to her housebound patients—at one point without enough PPE.

SHELAH MCMILLAN

School nurse, left; Philadelphia

McMillan, an ER nurse on the side, keeps track of her students even with schools closed, setting up a phone line to field questions from parents about their children’s health.

ANASTASIA VASILIEVA

Doctors' union leader; Moscow

An eye specialist who leads a medical trade union, Vasilieva was beaten and detained after criticizing the Kremlin's handling of the pandemic.



For the nursing staff, that pace was sustainable only for so long. During a COVID-19 lull in the summer, they reupped previous requests for hospital administrators to bring on as many as 50 more nurses to meet the anticipated fall surge. The two sides were at an impasse for weeks and then months, with the nurses even going on strike for two days, starting Nov. 17. They still have not come to terms, and the nurses continue to plead with management as they watch their wards fill up with COVID-19 patients. “This time I think we all have a little PTSD,” says Gentile, “but we’re laser focused.”

ELSEWHERE, HEALTH WORKERS are feeling not just a lack of appreciation, but open hostility. In the U.S., Fauci and others who have warned of the dangers of the virus and the importance of social distancing have been falsely accused of scaremongering and even exaggerating the pandemic to turn the public against the Trump Administration in the run-up to last month’s election. Calderone, the doctor in Turin, recalls the first wave of the pandemic when physicians were cheered as heroes, with songs from balconies and pizza delivered to their wards. No more. “Some people think that we are the ones who exaggerate, and therefore the cause of the restrictions,” she says. “It hurts and upsets me.”

In Russia, frontline health workers are battling the rancor and mistrust of not just the public, but also the government. In the spring, the government

insisted that the country had few cases relative to its geographical neighbors, and promised to provide doctors “high-quality and effective protection.” Anastasia Vasilieva, 36, the head of Alliance of Doctors, an independent medical trade union, has traveled to 11 hospitals in Russia, videotaping the poor working conditions and posting evidence of their government’s misleading claims on the alliance’s website. “Chief doctors force medical workers to treat patients without wearing PPE,” Vasilieva says, “and forbid them from speaking out if they have symptoms of the virus. I want to cry sometimes when I see what conditions medical workers are used to.”

The government branded Vasilieva a liar, and on April 2, the police beat and detained her overnight while she was trying to deliver PPE to a hospital in a small town north of Moscow. Since then, the police have continually shown up at hospitals the alliance has tried to enter, sometimes detaining members and pushing them forcibly away. Vasilieva insists she will not relent. “If the government wants to harm me, they will,” she says. “I’m not afraid.”

Inevitably a pandemic becomes a matter of social justice, as it has in America’s Black and Latinx communities, with marginalized groups suffering the most. In the U.S., this is especially evident in Native American communities, where risk for both infection and hospitalization is higher than among any other group in the country. Early



ALAN ROTH
Family doctor;
Queens, N.Y.

Roth saw more patients die this year than over the past 15 years. He contracted COVID-19 in March and continues to work despite ongoing fatigue.

in the pandemic, when the disease had not yet spread throughout the U.S., Pete Sands—musician, activist and member of the Navajo Nation—was working in the communications department of the Utah Navajo Health System when, as he told *TIME* in May, he was talking with the clinic’s board members. “There was just something that kind of spoke inside all of us saying, ‘This is going to come here.’” By May, the Navajo Nation had surpassed New York for the highest case rate in the country. Sands and the clinic established pop-up testing sites and—in collaboration with the Mormon church, the Utah Trucking Association, the produce company SunTerra and others—provided food and firewood through deliveries to rural residents and curbside pickups, where cars lined up for miles as residents waited their turns.

As caseloads dipped during the summer, Sands saw trouble coming. “People are gonna feel like we’re over this,” he recalls thinking. “They’re gonna start traveling; tourists are gonna come to the reservation.” And they did, but Sands and his team have kept at it, continuing their work as case counts have climbed again, and extending aid to Native American groups in Arizona and New Mexico.

THE PLAGUE WILL EVENTUALLY END. The suffering will stop. The dying will stop. There will be scars—lost family members, broken households,

the posttraumatic pain of health workers who held too many dying hands, wrapped too many lifeless bodies. But the world will come through to the other side of the crisis—and in some ways already has. It was China in which the virus emerged, and it is China where it has been most effectively brought under control.

Liu Chun, 48, a respiratory doctor specializing in ICU patients in Changsha, a city in central China, was one of the first to volunteer to travel to Wuhan when the virus broke out there—part of a group of 130 doctors from her hospital alone. Some of them wept in fear as they set out for Wuhan; one of them scribbled out his will. “I was a little nervous,” Liu concedes. “We began to call [the virus] ‘the silent killer.’”

The killer has stopped killing in most of China, and the coming vaccines should finally end it all but completely there—and everywhere else too. The memory of the horror will remain, and of the heroism too. In the face of a pandemic that dared humanity to show its best, its bravest, its most selfless selves, the frontline workers delivered. —*With reporting by* ABIGAIL ABRAMS, JAMIE DUCHARME, TARA LAW, KATIE REILLY *and* FRANCESCA TRIANNI/NEW YORK; FRANCESCA BERARDI/TURIN; CHARLIE CAMPBELL/CHANGSHA; ABHISHYANT KIDANGOOR/HONG KONG; MADELINE ROACHE/LONDON; *and* ABBY VESOULIS/WASHINGTON □

IN SOLIDARITY

Protester
Ismail Bronson
raises his fist
at a peaceful
demonstration
at the Lincoln
Memorial in
Washington on
June 2, eight
days after George
Floyd's killing



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDRÉ CHUNG



RACIAL-JUSTICE ORGANIZERS

They brought millions to the streets to demand an end to systemic racism

By Justin Worland

PORCHE BENNETT-BEY HAD A SIMPLE MESSAGE for then candidate Joe Biden in September when she approached the microphone at Grace Lutheran Church in Kenosha, Wis.: he needed to better understand the Black experience in her hometown. “A lot of people won’t tell the truth,” she said without flinching. “But I’m telling the truth.”

Kenosha had been in the headlines for days after Jacob Blake, a Black man, was shot in the back seven times by police and left partially paralyzed. Protests engulfed the city, pushing local officials to impose a curfew. Later, a white teenager gunned down protesters, killing two, and President Donald Trump visited to court votes behind a slogan of “law and order.”

Bennett-Bey, a local organizer, expressed frustration that the officers who shot Blake remained free, immune to laws that would surely have condemned anyone without a badge, but she also explained that these events didn’t happen in a vacuum. She told Biden how gentrification had limited affordable housing stock and how police target the city’s minority population. She described feeling that she was turned away from work because of the color of her skin. She spoke urgently of the challenge of raising children amid the COVID-19 health crisis. “I just felt I might as well tell him about what was really going on,” she tells *TIME* at a late-November rally she planned. “Let him see my life.”

For decades, the words of those telling the truth have been left largely unheeded. Because the victor writes history, the history of the West has been written to minimize the realities experienced by people of color, even to those who experience them firsthand. Marginalized groups have been lied to, told they were intellectually inferior, or should be able to succeed if only they worked harder or pulled up their pants. That means the simple act of telling the truth requires courage—and can feel self-defeating. “Even if I should speak, no one would believe me,” James Baldwin wrote in 1962. “And they would not believe me precisely because they would know that what I said was true.”

But in the summer of 2020, the truth became unavoidable. For the better part of 10 minutes, a white police officer in Minneapolis knelt on George Floyd’s

neck even though he was clearly subdued and pleading with a refrain of “I can’t breathe.” The footage shook the world to its core. The callousness and indeed the racism were impossible to deny.

Suddenly, the voices of those who had long been sidelined broke through, demanding that the world pay attention and stop making excuses. But it wasn’t out of thin air. It was because activists like Bennett-Bey forced their fellow Americans to connect the dots and understand just how much—from police brutality to racial disparities in COVID-19 cases—is tied to systemic racism. Night after night, organizers put their bodies on the line, gathering people of all races at a time when close quarters posed a threat, on top of the risk of injury at the hands of law enforcement. They chanted Floyd’s name alongside those of other Black Americans killed in recent months—Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Elijah McClain. By some estimates, as much as 10% of the U.S. population took to the streets over the summer to call for an end to institutional racism and injustice, in what may have been the largest mass protest in American history.

“We have some of the whitest, wealthiest towns here in our district organizing Black Lives Matter rallies, vigils and marches,” says Jamaal Bowman, a Black Representative-elect from New York. “Young white kids are forcing their parents to be a part of the movement and to be part of the conversation.”

Marches erupted in more than 50 countries, in cities from Nairobi to Seoul to Rio de Janeiro, expanding beyond solidarity to highlight similar issues in their own nations. Black French activists exposed the country’s persistent police brutality and organized huge marches. Aboriginal Australians showed how attempts to eradicate their ancestors still shape their daily lives. The storytelling and the organizing of activists around the world drove a recognition that at least in polite company, yes, Black lives matter. Immigrant lives matter. Aboriginal lives matter.

Next year will usher in a new era: post-Trump, eventually postpandemic and post-racial awakening. Whether this moment will be channeled into concrete societal change or lost to the wind remains to be determined. “Is it going to happen overnight? No,” says Bennett-Bey. “But am I willing to put in the work to see that change? Yes.”

CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD wind their way through the school system hearing triumphant narratives about their country that are built on half-truths. Students in the U.S. learn that despite their nation’s history of allowing humans to be bought and sold, a handful of great heroes bent the so-called arc of history toward justice and excised racism. In England, the national curriculum stipulates that schoolchildren should learn “how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world,” but that rarely means exploring how Britain gained complete

PORCHE BENNETT-BEY Kenosha, Wis.

The Army veteran and mother of three quit her job as an in-home care assistant this summer to devote her time to racial-justice work. “This has changed my life,” she says.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ADRIAN OCTAVIUS WALKER FOR TIME

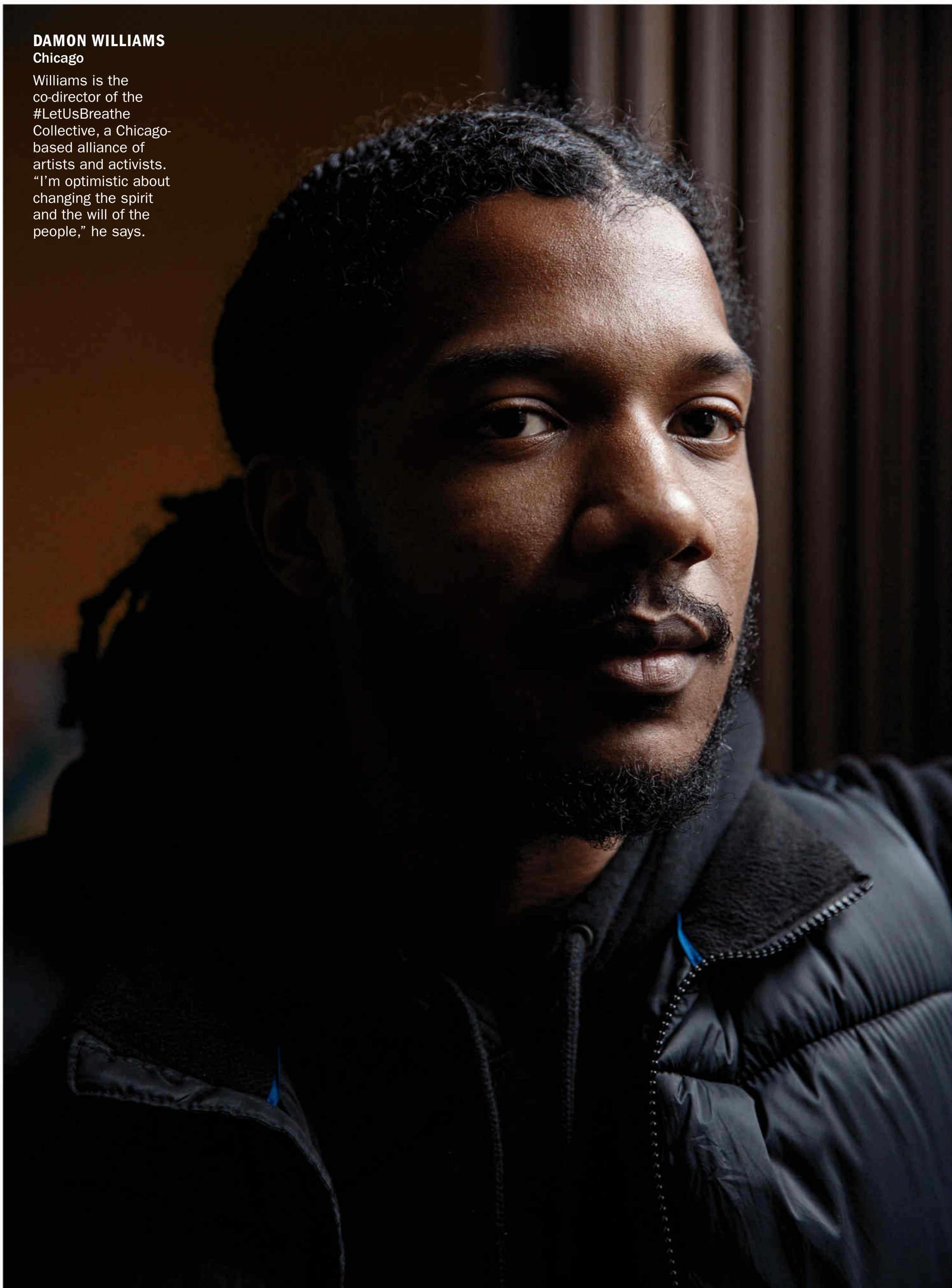


OLUCHI OMEOGA
Minneapolis

Omeoga, a Black trans organizer, co-founded Black Visions Collective in 2017. “It’s always those who are most at the margins who are leading the work,” they say. “We’re trying to build a world that does not exist yet.”

DAMON WILLIAMS
Chicago

Williams is the co-director of the #LetUsBreathe Collective, a Chicago-based alliance of artists and activists. "I'm optimistic about changing the spirit and the will of the people," he says.



or partial control of nearly a quarter of the globe at its peak or learning about the country's role in spreading slavery. In France, symbols, monuments and literature lionize the nation's motto of *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité*, but episodes of discrimination—including grievances from minority communities in the poorer banlieues of Paris and other cities—reveal the principles as more aspiration than reality. “Behind the words *democracy, equality, fraternity, liberty*, when we draw back the curtains, horrible things are happening,” says Assa Traoré, an activist in Paris whose brother died in police custody in 2016.

For those on the receiving end of systemic oppression, the disconnect is clear in days, months and years of lived experience, from the mundane inability to get a cab to persistent police harassment—or worse. And it can feel like you're yelling into a void. Most people of color will have been told, “It has nothing to do with race,” by even the most well-intentioned people in response to an instance of apparent racism. To succeed, many of them have learned to soften how they talk about racism. “If I spoke the language of James Baldwin as he speaks it, on the campaign stump, I'm probably not gonna get a lot of votes in Iowa,” former President Barack Obama said in a December interview with PEN America. “James Baldwin didn't have to go out and get votes.”

In 2020, many Black Americans and members of other marginalized groups decided the time had come to stop selecting their words so carefully. Floyd was killed in late May when the world was unusually tense, in the thick of mass unemployment and a global pandemic that disproportionately affected people of color. Almost immediately, activists sprang from their lockdowns to say, “Enough is enough.” Their work included the typical organizing of rallies, but the swell of public protests did something else too: it emboldened more people of color to speak truths they had understood for years but kept buried out of concern for repercussions. Suddenly, these stories gained traction unthinkable just a few weeks before.

Office workers demanded their employers fess up to their own legacies of racial bias in the workplace. Everyday people demanded that friends and family come to grips with this history—and threatened to end relationships if they didn't. “The Movement for Black Lives did a really good job,” says Oluchi Omeoga, co-founder of the Minnesota-based activist group Black Visions Collective. “They made it uncomfortable to be racist in this moment.”

Grassroots activists on almost every continent seized the moment. In Hamilton, New Zealand, a Maori tribal confederation said they would tear down a statue of John Fane Charles Hamilton—the British naval commander after whom the city is named—prompting the city council to remove it. In Bristol, England, protesters toppled a 125-year-old statue of



ASSA TRAORÉ Paris

Traoré left her job as a special-needs teacher to demand justice for her brother Adama, who died in police custody in 2016. “I vowed then and there that my brother's death would not become a minor news item,” she says.

a slave trader and threw it in the city's harbor. In Belgium, statues of King Leopold II—who oversaw the deaths of millions of Congolese—were defaced and removed from public view.

To Traoré, the activist in Paris, Floyd's death felt like a chilling repeat of history. In 2016, her brother Adama had died in police custody on his 24th birthday. A secret deposition by police reportedly included his dying words: “I can't breathe.” Yet despite a yearslong campaign for legal redress waged through her organization, the Truth for Adama committee, Traoré made little headway. As the video of Floyd went viral, the group issued a call on social media for a protest against police violence. Tens of thousands of people poured into the streets of Paris and other French cities carrying banners honoring George Floyd and Adama Traoré side by side. “Wow, we succeeded,” she recalls thinking, as she looked out at the sea of faces. “We sent the message that we have been talking about for four years.”

Her story has echoes on the other side of the world. In 2016, Wayne Fella Morrison, a 29-year-old Indigenous Australian, was found blue and unresponsive after correctional officers placed him facedown in the back of a prison van, bound and with a spit hood over his head. His sibling Latoya Aroha Rule, who uses the pronouns *they* and *them*, has since organized rallies to draw attention to Aboriginal deaths in custody.



Four years ago, hundreds marched in solidarity in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. Following Floyd's death, tens of thousands took to the streets across Australia holding BLACK LIVES MATTER signs alongside the names of Indigenous people who have died in custody. Rule was stunned. Floyd's death, they say, has allowed people "to see that this isn't the past, this is systemic and it's happening every day."

As with any movement, this one led to its share of backlash. In the U.S., many right-wing news outlets questioned protesters' motives and branded them violent "rioters," even as an independent study showed that 93% of this summer's racial protests were peaceful. For her part, Bennett-Bey received death threats, forcing her to think carefully about her every move and how to protect her children. And even as Trump promoted views that denigrated Black Americans and people of color more broadly, nearly 47% of American voters chose Trump. "Change is happening, change is coming, and that motivates us to keep going," says Damon Williams, an organizer in Chicago and founding member of the #LetUsBreathe Collective. "But that motivation is always being met with a counterinsurgency of obstacles."

Trump also tried to turn U.S. history into a campaign issue, railing against "critical race theorists on college campuses," referring to the theoretical framework academics have used to understand

LATOYA AROHA RULE

Adelaide, Australia

Rule, who is Aboriginal and Maori, traveled to the U.S. in 2019 to work with Black Lives Matter activists. "It took the last four years to get wider Adelaide and wider Australia to stand up for Black Lives Matter to this degree," they say.

how racism is ingrained in society. He condemned activists who believe "that the United States is not an exceptional country but an evil one."

But that's not what the activists are actually saying. To acknowledge the origins of our present circumstances isn't to condemn the U.S., France or any other country. The idea is that a more complete version of history allows us to build a better society. "If you want people to stand and put their hand on their heart and pledge allegiance to a flag," says Bennett-Bey, an Army veteran, "that allegiance that they're pledging should be made for them as well."

A MORE WIDESPREAD AWARENESS of the problems plaguing our societies, while critical, is not enough. After a news site published a video of police beating a Black man in Paris in November, French President Emmanuel Macron wrote on Facebook that the images "shame us" and that his government would come up with proposals to fight discrimination. But even as he decried racism, his government was working to implement a controversial bill to ban publication of images of police officers online. (Lawmakers from his party later abandoned the measure amid a public outcry.) Biden suggested on the campaign trail that police could shoot suspects in the leg rather than the chest, a comment that likely has no attached policy proposal but is indicative of the uphill battle that activists face. "I'm nervous that folks have been socialized under this system for so long that they're unable to think that another system is possible," says Omeoga. "How we lose is that people don't think that we can actually do better."

But longtime activists know that progress is slow. "This is a marathon, and you're running your lap of the race," says Barbara Lee, a Democratic member of Congress from California who has called for a progressive agenda to combat systemic racism. "I'm going to continue to run this lap of the race in the Congress and do what I can do to move our agenda forward because we still haven't addressed the core issues of racial injustice, systemic racism, gender inequality; we haven't addressed human rights, LGBTQI equality."

The work in national capitals represents just a small piece of the puzzle. While Bennett-Bey worked to get voters to the polls for the presidential election, her focus has shifted back to what she can do in Kenosha. She takes pride in her efforts to push the city council to fund body cameras for the city's police and her engagement with local officials. Across the country, other activists work toward similar incremental progress, understanding that after the awakening they helped inspire, whatever changes come out of Washington, Paris or Canberra will be driven by what happens on the ground. — *With reporting by* ANNA PURNA KAMBHAMPATY/HONOLULU; MARIAH ESPADA/WASHINGTON; AMY GUNIA/HONG KONG; KARL VICK/MINNEAPOLIS; and VIVIENNE WALT/PARIS □

Businessperson OF THE YEAR

ERIC YUAN

The CEO of Zoom
brought an isolated world
a little closer together

By Andrew R. Chow

WHEN MILO MCCABE'S DAUGHTER WAS BORN, HE COULD SEE SHE had 10 fingers, 10 toes and dark swirls of hair; he could hear her piercing cry. But he couldn't make out the color of her eyes and, heartbreakingly, he couldn't hold her. He was watching over Zoom.

McCabe had never considered not being in the delivery room. But in early April, he fell ill with COVID-19 and was rushed to a hospital in Southern California. When his wife Roxanne went into labor more than a week later at the same hospital, he was still there—but could barely get out of bed.

A video call was the next best thing: they wanted to see each other's faces, record the proceedings and stay on for hours for free without technical glitches. So they chose Zoom—a platform that they, like most of the world, had barely used previously but that now seemed to be everywhere.

"I remember going through contractions and hearing his voice saying, 'You're doing good, babe,' every few minutes," Roxanne says. "I would turn to look at the video on my left, as if he was going to go somewhere—but he wasn't going anywhere." They were together for almost 11 hours before Emberly Anne emerged into the world. "It wasn't how I anticipated your coming-out party, kid," McCabe says eight months later, looking down at the daughter in his arms.

If the idea of a Zoom birth was shocking to the McCabes, it would have been no less surprising to Eric Yuan. The 50-year-old founder and CEO of Zoom had worked for a decade to build a no-frills, highly functional conferencing platform for businesses. Now

CEO Eric Yuan
on a video of a
recorded Zoom
conversation



it was being used in all sorts of unexpected places, from delivery rooms to grade schools. “We never thought about consumers or K-12 schools when we started planning the year 2020,” says Yuan, speaking over Zoom from his home in the Bay Area. He had ordered employees to work from home in early March, but it wasn’t until weeks later—around when U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson tweeted a photo of a Cabinet meeting over Zoom—that it dawned on Yuan that his company might play a major role in this new virtual world order.

Yuan soon found himself serving as the world’s relationship liaison, social chair, principal, convention-center host, chief security officer and pallbearer. Despite competition from corporate behemoths like Google, Apple and Microsoft, Zoom jumped out in front of the video pack, catapulting from 10 million daily meeting participants in December to a staggering 300 million in April. Zoom became a verb and a prefix, a defining syllable of a socially distant era. As his company’s valuation soared, Yuan crashed into the *Forbes* billionaires list.

But almost as soon as Zoom became ubiquitous, its vertiginous rise was imperiled: Security flaws left users vulnerable to surveillance and harassment. Its very popularity produced burnout while exposing the gap between white collar households and those without even Internet. Some accused Yuan of being just another complacent Big Tech guru whose product heightened division and misinformation.

Yuan responded with swift course correction and transparency, at least to the security issues, gaining the trust of many critics—and the company’s stock has tripled since April. Zoom was named Apple’s most downloaded free app of the year. It won the 2020 video wars partially because, like its founder, it’s flexible, intuitive and pretense-free. It was adaptable in a year when there was hardly a more vital attribute—and it offered glimpses, promising and ominous alike, of what human connection might look like for years to come.

IT MIGHT BE FAIR to call Zoom a product of young love. In the late 1980s, Eric Yuan, born Yuan Zheng in Tai’an, China, was a math and computer-science student at Shandong University. The woman who would become his wife attended college 10 hours away. On his way to visit her, Yuan would doze off, dreaming of a way to instantly see her face.

Yuan became obsessed with the dot-com boom, but his American dreams were stalled when he was rejected for a visa eight times. “I was just so frustrated,” he says. “But I was going to keep trying until they tell me, ‘Don’t come here anymore.’”

Yuan was finally granted an H-1 visa in 1997 at the age of 27. (He became a U.S. citizen a decade later.) He started as a coder at WebEx and soon became integral to building its videoconferencing platform.

After Cisco bought WebEx in 2007, Dan Scheinman, senior vice president of Cisco Media Solutions Group at the time and now a member of Zoom’s board of directors, remembers learning of Yuan’s reputation as “demanding, technically gifted, one of the best product people in the world and incredible in front of customers,” he recalls. “It was a bit like we had Mozart, but no one realized it.”

Yuan’s restless energy comes through bright and clear, even on Zoom. He shifts from side to side, his sentences rushing out in declarative bursts, his lines of explanation linear and logical, and often predicated on the belief that humanity is inherently good. “The world is fair,” he says at one point. “Keep moving forward, and focus on the things you can control.”

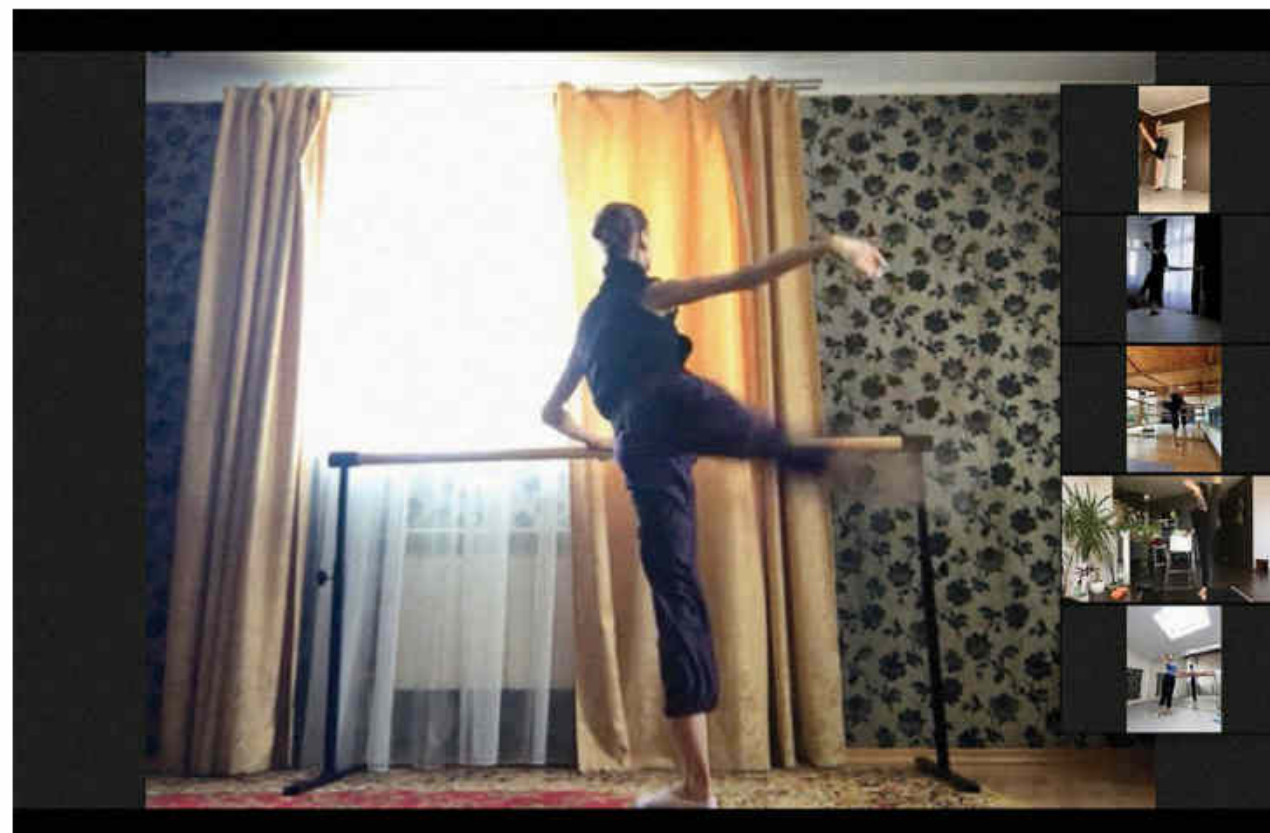
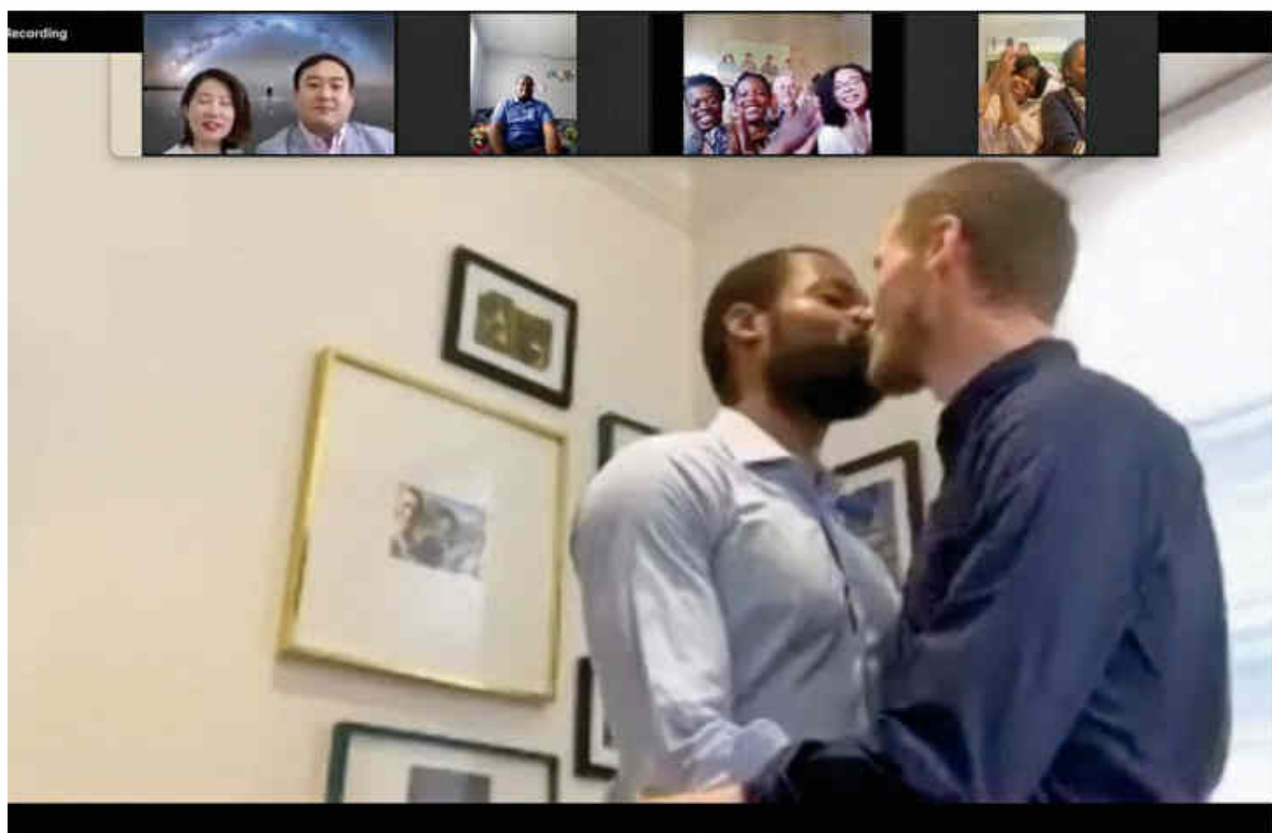
It was this confidence that led a few dozen WebEx engineers to decamp with Yuan in 2011 when he announced that he would be leaving the company to start his own video platform. Zoom’s software launched in 2013, touting a free basic service along with several paid tiers for different-size organizations. While many other startups leaned heavily on free products to induce widespread saturation, Zoom targeted modest school and business networks that would pay for subscriptions year after year.

After nearly a decade of steady growth, the company went public in 2019, to considerable fanfare. Unlike other tech IPOs racking up huge losses (like Uber, Lyft and Slack), Zoom was both debt-free and profitable. And thanks in part to Yuan’s oft repeated emphasis on “delivering happiness,” Zoom was also one of the highest employee-rated companies to work for, according to surveys from Glassdoor and Comparably. Yuan had carved a reliable lane and was cautious about moving into the consumer market too quickly. “In December, our plans were the same as the year before: no big ideas, just keep innovating,” he says.

Then the pandemic hit, forcing hundreds of millions of people across the world to shelter in place. They doomscrolled and binged *Tiger King*; they baked and bought guitars. And in surging numbers, they logged on to Zoom. They used it for birthday parties, family gatherings, workouts, company meetings, happy hours, blind dates. *Saturday Night Live* returned with Kate McKinnon yelling, “Live from Zoom, it’s sometime between March and Auguuuuust!” New York legalized Zoom marriages, to Yuan’s delight. From January to April, the company’s metric of annualized meeting minutes jumped twentyfold to more than 2 trillion, while revenue soared 169% compared with the same quarter in 2019. “You feel like your dream is coming true after many years of hard work,” Yuan says.

How did a niche platform vault past bigger competitors like Apple (FaceTime), Google (Meet), Cisco and Skype to define the medium? Off the bat, Zoom is free, at least for 40-minute periods. It’s strikingly

‘IN
DECEMBER,
OUR PLANS
WERE THE
SAME AS
THE YEAR
BEFORE.’



easy to operate: you don't need to download an app, use a specific browser or operating system, or even have an account. The company's cloud-based operation allowed it to scale relatively seamlessly. Virtual backgrounds lend both novelty and privacy.

A snowballing effect fueled momentum: the more users signed onto Zoom, wrote trend pieces, created Zoom memes and saw it being used on TV, the more others gravitated toward the platform. It didn't hurt that the once ubiquitous Skype had stagnated as its parent company Microsoft prioritized another video platform, Teams, or that young people were already familiar with the platform, thanks to its presence in educational institutions.

Zoom may have been boosted by its very name—crisp, familiar and informal, with positive connotations. "I've never seen anything happen so fast," says Carmen Fought, a linguistics professor at Pitzer College in California, "but it's never been the case that everybody needed a word for something all at the same time."

Professional sectors were the first to adapt to Zoom en masse. By June, 42% of the U.S. labor force was working from home full time, according to a Stanford study. Big banking and international businesses turned to Zoom in droves; so did 125,000

K-12 schools, partially because Yuan offered them the platform for free.

Zoom also became a lifeline for fostering community at a moment of acute isolation. Sprawling video parties broke out every weekend, including Club Quarantine, a queer virtual Toronto nightclub that blossomed into an international phenomenon. On Saturday nights, stars like Charli XCX and Lady Gaga stopped by to cavort with hundreds of revelers, including those with disabilities who had previously been shut out of nightlife culture. "Accessibility has been a gap in the industry. It wasn't in the forefront until we were all forced to be online," Ceréna, a co-founder of Club Quarantine, says.

But while some events moved smoothly to the virtual world, other, weightier ones—like religious ceremonies and funerals—proved more challenging. When Estelle Kaufman, 92, died in San Antonio in July, her grandson Brad and their Jewish temple organized a Zoom memorial service. The service went off without a technical hitch: family and friends from around the country tuned in, reminisced and shared their pain. But Kaufman says their emotions were somewhat dulled, the catharsis shallow. "It seemed hard for some people to get out what they wanted to say, because of the box they were locked in," he says.

THE YEAR IN ZOOM

Clockwise from top left: A wedding in New York; dancers of the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow perform in their homes; a family in New York celebrates their child's first birthday; a church service in Germany

Zoom's greatest strength—its accessibility—allowed it to be used in a seemingly unlimited variety of ways. But the company's focus on ease of use soon became its greatest vulnerability. "This is the Silicon Valley way: get to market as fast as you can, make it super user-friendly, and security is an afterthought," says Patrick Wardle, a security researcher at the software company Jamf.

Because Zoom wasn't particularly well known pre-pandemic, it hadn't been extensively targeted by hackers or researchers. But its shortcomings started to become clear in the spring, with alarming headlines piling up by the day: Malicious interlopers, dubbed Zoombombers, were crashing meetings or classrooms to deliver lewd, racist or sexist tirades. Zoom was quietly sending data to Facebook without notifying its users. Zoom lied about offering end-to-end encryption, leading to an FTC investigation.

Wardle poked into Zoom's code and was taken aback at how easily he was able to find two bugs, including one that would allow a hacker to take control of a user's camera and microphone. Wardle's findings, published on March 30, contributed to a widespread backlash—Elon Musk banned the use of Zoom at SpaceX, and the New York City public-school system nixed its use for remote learning.

"It was a shocking thing," Yuan says. "I felt like we were working so hard—so why was there so much bad press?" He apologized profusely and announced he would spend the next 90 days improving the company's privacy and security. Privately, he reached out to Wardle and other security researchers to ask for guidance. "If you do not listen to them, how can you fix that?" Yuan says.

Night after sleepless night, Yuan stayed up monitoring server functionality and reviewing new security features. He hired prominent security researchers, upgraded the platform's encryption and expanded its bug-bounty program to compensate ethical hackers. The transparency and urgency with which Yuan acted impressed Wardle, who is used to tech companies obfuscating. "Their feet were held to the fire, and they took a really emotionally mature response," he says.

Perhaps the biggest lingering issue is censorship. In June, following pressure from the Chinese government, Zoom suspended the accounts of three activists who had planned a remembrance of Tiananmen Square. Having already faced scrutiny for its use of servers and developers in China, the company felt a significant backlash. Yuan reversed course, apologized and severely limited Zoom access in mainland China. But the damage was done. Missouri Senator Josh Hawley insinuated Yuan held a torn national allegiance between the U.S. and China, an accusation that pained Yuan. "I'm a Chinese American. Zoom is a proud American company. That's a fact," he says, his voice rising.

Still, censorship remains the dilemma that faces

any nominally global platform operating at the pleasure of national governments that define free speech their way. "If someone tells us, 'There's a terrorist group identified by our government,' then we are going to shut them down," Yuan says.

IN NOVEMBER, WHEN PFIZER announced the initial results of its vaccine, Yuan's net worth plunged \$5 billion as investors cast doubt on Zoom's postpandemic relevance. The news came as a relief to Yuan: he hasn't much cared for the notoriety or the unpredictability this year has brought him. "I still want to go back to the product side—that's my strength, not as a public figure," he says. "I just do not enjoy that."

But it doesn't seem as if Zoom will shift into the slow lane anytime soon. At the end of November, Zoom's revenue had hit \$777 million, up 367% from last year; it now boasts 433,700 paying subscribers with more than 10 employees, a 63% increase from just six months ago at the height of the first wave. Companies are increasingly willing to forgo costly office space and hire employees regardless of location. According to the U.S. research firm Gartner, only a quarter of workplace meetings will take place in person by 2024, signaling a hybrid work future.

The continued proliferation of video calling comes with plenty of concerns. While productivity has held, mental health has slipped worldwide; many users are complaining about "Zoom fatigue," in which constant video calls exacerbate burnout and exhaustion. The calls can highlight disparities among participants, severely disadvantaging those with crowded or chaotic home situations or limited access to the Internet. At the same time, these new modes of communication have widened the gap between white collar workers and the essential workers forced to risk contracting the virus every day they report to their in-person jobs.

But there are ways that a new Zoom reality could also break down long-standing norms. Zoom offers the potential to reset hierarchical workplace dynamics (when everyone's on the same screen, there's no corner office). It cuts down on needless business flights. Studies have shown how increased flexibility positively impacts women in the workplace, particularly mothers with newborns.

Whether or not Zoom ushers in a more equitable future, there are few who will be able to forget the first year spent on the platform. The McCabes, healthy and at home, are looking forward to showing Emberly Anne the Zoom video of her birth 10 years from now. "To live in this world we do with the tech we have, we got really lucky," Roxanne says. Zoom was not what we imagined for the year, but it's the best we had—and it held us together, one flickering call at a time. —*With reporting by CHARLIE CAMPBELL/SHANGHAI and BILLY PERRIGO/LONDON* □

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Athlete OF THE YEAR

LEBRON JAMES

On the way to another NBA title, he transformed what an athlete can be

By Sean Gregory

AT 11:58 A.M. ON JUNE 8, LEBRON JAMES LOGGED ON TO A VIDEO call from the living room of his Los Angeles-area home. As the clock hit noon, James, who abhors tardiness, took command of a virtual meeting that included more than 20 top athletes, entertainers and political pros. He set a serious tone: across the country, people were filling the streets to march against racial injustice and demand systemic change. What could this group do about it?

James had the answer, and it wasn't another celebrity PSA: an all-star coalition committed to pushing back against the suppression of Black voters. To lay out the severity of the problem, Michigan secretary of state Jocelyn Benson detailed how disinformation campaigns attempt to lower turnout. Golden State Warriors forward Draymond Green expressed discomfort about encouraging others to be politically engaged since he himself had not voted since 2008. But such stories, he was assured, were exactly the point. Green's experience could inspire others to vote for the first time, or return to the polls as he would. On a follow-up call 10 days later, comedian Kevin Hart asked if they would all be receiving Black Panther berets.

Hart was joking, but he spoke to the urgency with which James was approaching the cause. The moment required a movement, and LeBron James, the greatest basketball player of his generation—arguably of any generation—and one of the most prominent Black men in the world, would lead the way. “That was my initial call to action,” James tells TIME in late November, “to let people know what my mission was, what my



passion was, and how we were going to deliver.”

On June 23, James launched the nonprofit More Than a Vote, with a single-minded focus on getting more people to the polls. The group pushed for sports arenas to be used as polling places on the grounds that they could allow for social distancing while accommodating large numbers of voters. In the hope of keeping lines moving and locations open, they recruited young people to replace older poll workers who were sidelined by fears of COVID-19. By August, nearly 50 athletes, entertainers and media figures—including WNBA player and ESPN host Chiney Ogwumike and NFL stars Patrick Mahomes and Odell Beckham Jr.—had signed on as founding members. The organization partnered with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and by Election Day, less than five months after its founding, had helped recruit more than 40,000 election workers nationally and in places like Atlanta, Milwaukee, Detroit and Philadelphia—all cities that helped deliver key swing states to Joe Biden.

At every step, James supported the work by recruiting fellow athletes to the cause, promoting More Than a Vote to his more than 48 million followers on Twitter and turning himself into a billboard by wearing a VOTE OR DIE! shirt to a practice. It was the highest-profile example of the surge in activism that spread across the sports world in 2020. Spurred by a pandemic that has disproportionately taken the lives and livelihoods of people of color and by police killings of unarmed Black Americans, everyone from college athletes to tennis stars to race-car drivers to hockey players did things like speak out against racial injustice, join marches and even lead the temporary shutdowns of major sporting events. Indeed, the NBA playoffs might well have never finished had James not decided to stay in the league’s Disney World “bubble” and see the season through.

“Not only is he the best player, but he has the most powerful voice,” says tennis champion Naomi Osaka. During her run to the U.S. Open title in September, she wore masks honoring seven Black Americans killed in recent years, including Trayvon Martin, Tamir Rice and Breonna Taylor.

After nearly two decades in the NBA, James has fully embraced that his talent on the court is a means to achieving something greater off it. And this year, more than in any before it, he showed why he is unrivaled in both. Despite misgivings, James played on in the bubble and led the Los Angeles Lakers to the NBA championship—his first with the team and fourth overall. By staying, James increased his leverage and influence, and got deep-pocketed owners, fellow athletes and fans the world over engaged directly with democracy. And through it all, he spoke personally to the anguish of Black Americans, channeling pain and outrage into a plan of action.

More Than a Vote did not endorse a political candidate. But James believes the result of his organiza-

tion’s work in the election—Donald Trump’s removal from office—will ease some of the tumult of the past four years. “At the end of the day, when you’re going through adversity or you’re going through anything in life, the one person that you believe you can count on is the person that’s in the captain’s seat,” says James, who knows from occupying his team’s top chair. “He can always keep everything calm, make people feel like no matter what we’re going through, we’re going to make it through. And I believe, as Americans, we didn’t feel that over the last four years. We always felt like we were in the ocean, and the waves are crashing against our boat, and the thunderstorms are coming down. So I believe that our people just got tired of not feeling a sense of calmness, and they went out and used their right to vote.”

Despite all this effort, a large swath of America would still prefer that James just “shut up and dribble,” as a pundit once put it. When asked if he had anything to say to such critics, he chuckles. “You hear my laugh?” James says. “There it is. That is my direct message to them.”

THIS WAVE OF ACTIVISM crested on Aug. 26, when the Milwaukee Bucks declined to take the floor three days after police in Kenosha, Wis., shot Jacob Blake seven times in the back. Even in a year that shattered all norms, a wildcat strike—in the playoffs—seemed unfathomable. Then the WNBA, NHL, pro tennis, and teams in Major League Baseball and Major League Soccer all took a pause too. Sports, with the support of most team owners and league officials, had been forced to a halt in support of Black lives. “I respect the hell out of them for doing that,” John Carlos, the American sprinter who raised his fist along with Tommie Smith on the medals stand at the 1968 Olympics, told *TIME* on the evening of the Bucks’ walkout. “Because you have to squeeze the toothpaste tube to get people to respond.”

Momentum had been building all summer. When the WNBA started its delayed season in July, the players publicly dedicated it to Taylor, a Louisville, Ky., medical worker killed by police in a botched raid of her home. After Republican Senator Kelly Loeffler, a co-owner of the Atlanta Dream, called Black Lives Matter “divisive” and “Marxist” in July, many players started wearing shirts backing her opponent, the Rev. Raphael Warnock. The month before, NASCAR had announced a formal ban on Confederate flags at its events and properties after Bubba Wallace, the lone Black driver in the top series, spoke out about the discomfort the flags caused. The night the Bucks took their stand, Osaka, who marched in Minneapolis following George Floyd’s death, withdrew from the semifinals of the Western & Southern Open in similar protest. Rather than make her forfeit, the tournament suspended play in solidarity.

‘WE HAD
TAKEN THE
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FORWARD?’



Athletes around the world took up the mantle. The 23-year-old Manchester United forward Marcus Rashford successfully lobbied the U.K. government to provide \$220 million in benefits to support families in need over the next year. Lewis Hamilton, the Formula 1 superstar and the sport's only Black driver, began kneeling before races wearing a BLACK LIVES MATTER shirt and helped launch an effort to create opportunities for Black drivers and engineers in motorsports.

Taken together, the demands and demonstrations marked a new phase of player empowerment and agency that has been more than a half-century in the making. In 1969, Curt Flood of the St. Louis Cardinals challenged the reserve clause, which could bind players to teams for life. That led to free agency, which gave athletes in team sports significantly more control of their economic destiny. As their star power grew, so did their appeal to marketers. And no athlete bridged those worlds better than Michael Jordan, whose lucrative deals with Nike, McDonald's and other major brands showed that transcendent sports stars could be their own corporate behemoths—so long, it was thought, as they steered clear of contentious political or social issues.

For years, Jordan's famous line—"Republicans buy

sneakers too"—has been an axiom for athletes who want to capitalize on their celebrity. He had every reason to think that way. Muhammad Ali sacrificed the prime years of his career and became a pariah for refusing to serve in a war he viewed as unjust. Carlos and Smith received death threats after their Black Power salute. In 2016, Colin Kaepernick started kneeling during the national anthem to call attention to police brutality; he hasn't played in the NFL since that season.

It was James, heir to Jordan on the court and in the boardroom, who established a new paradigm, in which commercial clout exists alongside political principle. He remains one of the world's top pitchers, endorsing Nike, AT&T, Walmart and other major brands. And he has laid waste to the dated notion that political and social engagement is some sort of distraction for athletes. In 2020, James led the NBA in assists, for the first time in his career, before winning the NBA championship and his fourth Finals MVP award, at age 35. Athletes can now bring their full humanity to their games, insisting that their identities be recognized and rejecting the notion that their athleticism is all that matters.

"When you have somebody of LeBron's stature setting the tone, it makes it that much easier for

Clockwise from top left: F1's Lewis Hamilton kneels before a race; Naomi Osaka honors Black victims of violence at the U.S. Open; Manchester United's Marcus Rashford raises his fist to call for justice; the WNBA's Sue Bird urges fans to vote

everyone to get on board,” says 11-time WNBA all-star Sue Bird, who also won a fourth career league title this season and who came up with the idea of wearing VOTE WARNOCK T-shirts. Hamilton, who won a record-tying seventh F1 championship this season, points to James as a ballast. “When I saw across the pond that another top athlete was also fighting for similar causes,” Hamilton tells TIME, “I knew, O.K., I’m not alone here.”

ON THE EVENING of Aug. 26, hours after the Bucks refused to take the court, NBA players and coaches gathered in a ballroom of Disney World’s Coronado Springs Resort to figure out next steps. COVID-19 had shut down the NBA season in March, and the league had restarted in late July in an Orlando bubble that included daily testing and other safety measures. The room was on edge. Players were still processing the horror of what had happened in Kenosha.

James was frustrated. No one, in his mind, was making a compelling case for returning to the floor. With the rest of the Lakers, he walked out of the meeting before it ended. Michele Roberts, executive director of the National Basketball Players Association, thought he might also leave the bubble—and take the rest of the league with him. “If he had said, ‘What we are doing is too important, and screw the championship,’ I think that would have had a lot of guys saying, ‘Wow, you know, he’s about to give up another f-cking ring, so maybe I should check myself and wonder whether this basketball stuff is really that important,’” she says. “I don’t think we would have played.”

James says he was “very close” to leaving; that night he told his wife and family there was a strong possibility he was headed home. “We were still with our brothers in solidarity, meaning the Milwaukee Bucks,” he says. “It was something that hit home in their backyard. We all understood that. But if we’re going to move forward, what is our plan? At that very moment, I didn’t believe that we, as a collective group of players, had a plan at all. We had taken the stand to sit out. But how are we going to make a difference going forward?”

A conversation between James, players’ union president Chris Paul, a few other key players and Barack Obama helped provide clarity. The former President’s advice: Use your leverage. The next day, James addressed the NBA owners, their faces beamed in on a screen. “He knows how to apply pressure,” says Lakers owner Jeanie Buss, who on Dec. 3 signed her star player to a two-year, \$85 million contract extension. James asked the assembled billionaires to join the players in helping more people vote. “LeBron was a calming voice but one that I didn’t view as oppositional,” says NBA commissioner Adam Silver. “I viewed it as ‘All right, everyone, we have certain celebrity and reach that we bring to the table; team

owners obviously have enormous resources and their own network of associations. Working together, we can accomplish even more.’”

“There was no other player in that room who could have done that,” says Armond Hill, a veteran NBA assistant coach who helped spark voter-registration efforts among the players, one marker of rising political awareness. More than 95% of players wound up registering for the 2020 election, while just 22% voted in 2016, according to the NBA union.

“I just wanted to reassure that they were giving us their word,” says James, “and I was going to give them our word that we would continue to play on with the season, as long as we had action going on off the floor at the same time.”

Owners pledged to work with local election officials to convert arenas into polling places, establish a social-justice coalition with players and coaches, and provide some playoff advertising space to promote civic engagement. After Obama appeared as a virtual fan during the broadcast of Game 1 of the NBA Finals on Sept. 30 and thanked a group of first-time poll workers, More Than a Vote’s registrations more than doubled—from 12,439 to 26,398—over the next five days.

Nadia Lee, a recent law-school grad living in the Atlanta area, signed on after a tweet from James. She also recruited about 10 friends to staff precincts. From 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Nov. 3, she helped people fill out provisional ballots at a school in Georgia’s DeKalb County. “I did not know I could be a poll worker,” says Lee, “until LeBron told me.”

“In the Black community, we always hear the notion of ‘We want to see change,’” says James. “But we rarely actually go out and try to help and call for action, actually do it. So I can say that my Black people and my Black communities, they actually went out and said not only did they want change, they actually went out and did it.”

Christopher Towler, founder of the Black Voter Project, believes that James’ work predominantly affected Black voters and had a real effect on turnout. “He influenced the outcome of the election,” says Towler, an assistant professor of political science at California State University, Sacramento. “The jury is still out on if he tipped it.”

JAMES’ WORK with More Than a Vote marks another milestone in his personal evolution. “You want to keep athletics and politics separate,” James said back in June 2008. He did support Obama that year, but it was in 2012, when James posted a picture of himself and his Miami Heat teammates in hooded sweat-shirts in honor of Trayvon Martin, that he began to more publicly fuse the two. In 2014, James wore an I CAN’T BREATHE warm-up shirt before a game in Brooklyn after a New York City grand jury declined to indict an officer who had applied a choke hold to

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Eric Garner, who had uttered those three words before his death. Still, as recently as July 2017, an article in the *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, titled “Athletes and/or Activists: LeBron James and Black Lives Matter,” argued that James “wears [the activist] label cautiously.”

That’s no longer the case. Early in his NBA career, he started giving back in his hometown of Akron, Ohio, with an annual charity bike ride. Now, a collage of students and community members from his I Promise School—which opened in the city in 2018 and offers free busing, meals, uniforms, bikes and other resources outside the classroom, like mental-health support—flanks James on a Wheaties box. In July, James’ foundation opened the I Promise Village, a transitional housing complex for school families in need, like LaTasha Clark’s. A home health aide, Clark fell behind on bills after losing work hours because of the pandemic, and she and her two children were evicted from their house. They moved into the I Promise Village in August, as Clark’s daughter started third grade at the school.

“He has opened up doors that I never thought would have been opened for me,” says Clark, fighting tears. “I’m just a regular, single Black mother trying to make her way. Just being here, I’ve met a lot of different people that have supported me more than anyone I have ever known in my life.” The next step for I Promise is an initiative centered on job training

and financial literacy.

This work changes lives. It also builds trust. “There is an attachment through racial identity, for African Americans especially, when they see even the most privileged famous athletes still understand and relate to the Black community like anyone else would,” says the Black Voter Project’s Towler. “LeBron James can fill a tremendous gap in future mobilization efforts and really empower Black people in ways politicians since Obama haven’t been able to.”

As he embarks on his 18th NBA season this winter following the shortest off-season in North American major pro team sports history—the 2020–21 schedule tips off on Dec. 22; the Lakers clinched the 2020 championship on Oct. 11—James insists his work is just starting. “We feel really good right now,” he says. “But you don’t want to feel great. Because it’s never done.” More Than a Vote is now reminding ex-felons of their voting rights in Georgia and mobilizing young first-time voters for the state’s Jan. 5 runoff election, which could determine control of the U.S. Senate.

“It would never, ever go back to us just playing our respective sports,” says James. “It will never be that way for as long as I’m around. And hopefully I’ve inspired enough athletes that even when I’m gone, that legacy will carry on.” —With reporting by ALEJANDRO DE LA GARZA

James celebrates his fourth NBA title on Oct. 11 in Orlando; he’s the first player to win the Finals MVP award for three different teams

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Entertainer OF THE YEAR

BTS

In a year when live music
went quiet, they became the
biggest band in the world

By Raisa Bruner

IT'S LATE OCTOBER, AND SUGA IS SITTING ON A COUCH STRUMMING a guitar. His feet are bare, his long hair falling over his eyes. He noodles around, testing out chords and muttering softly to himself, silver hoop earrings glinting in the light. "I just started learning a few months ago," he says. It's an intimate moment, the kind you'd spend with a new crush in a college dorm room while they confess rock-star ambitions. But Suga is one-seventh of the Korean pop band BTS, which means I'm just one of millions of fans watching, savoring the moment.

BTS isn't just the biggest K-pop act on the charts. They've become the biggest band in the world—full stop. Between releasing multiple albums, breaking every type of record and appearing in these extemporaneous livestreams in 2020, BTS ascended to the zenith of pop stardom. And they did it in a year defined by setbacks, one in which the world hit pause and everyone struggled to maintain their connections. Other celebrities tried to leverage this year's challenges; most failed. (Remember that star-studded "Imagine" video?) But BTS's bonds to their international fan base, called ARMY, deepened amid the pandemic, a global racial reckoning and worldwide shutdowns. "There are times when I'm still taken aback by all the unimaginable things that are happening," Suga tells TIME later. "But I ask myself, Who's going to do this, if not us?"

Today, K-pop is a multibillion-dollar business, but for decades the gatekeepers of the music world—the Western radio moguls, media outlets and number crunchers—treated it as a novelty. BTS hits the expected high notes of traditional K-pop: sharp outfits,

PHOTOGRAPH BY MOK JUNG WOOK FOR TIME



BTS photographed
in Seoul on Oct. 29.
From left: RM, Suga,
V, Jung Kook, J-Hope,
Jimin and Jin

crisp choreography and dazzling videos. But they've matched that superstar shine with a surprising level of honesty about the hard work that goes into it. BTS meets the demands of Top 40's authenticity era without sacrificing any of the gloss that's made K-pop a cultural force. It doesn't hurt that their songs are irresistible: polished confections that are dense with hooks and sit comfortably on any mainstream playlist.

BTS is not the first Korean act to establish a secure foothold in the West, yet their outsize success today is indicative of a sea change in the inner workings of fandom and how music is consumed. From propelling their label to a \$7.5 billion IPO valuation to inspiring fans to match their \$1 million donation to Black Lives Matter, BTS is a case study in music-industry dominance through human connection. Once Suga masters the guitar, there won't be much left for them to conquer.

IN AN ALTERNATE UNIVERSE where COVID-19 didn't exist, BTS's 2020 would likely have looked much like the years that came before. The group got its start in 2010, after K-pop mastermind and Big Hit Entertainment founder Bang Si-hyuk recruited RM, 26, from Seoul's underground rap scene. He was soon joined by Jin, 28; Suga, 27; J-Hope, 26; Jimin, 25; V, 24; and Jung Kook, 23, selected for their dancing, rapping and singing talents.

But unlike their peers, BTS had an antiestablishment streak, both in their activism and in the way they contributed to their songwriting and production—which was then rare in K-pop, although that's started to change. In BTS's debut 2013 single, “No More Dream,” they critiqued Korean social pressures, like the high expectations placed on schoolkids. They have been open about their own challenges with mental health and spoken publicly about their support for LGBTQ+ rights. (Same-sex marriage is still not legally recognized in South Korea.) And they've modeled a form of gentler, more neutral masculinity, whether dyeing their hair pastel shades or draping their arms lovingly over one another. All this has made them unique not just in K-pop but also in the global pop marketplace.

In March, BTS was prepping for a global tour. Instead, they stayed in Seoul to wait out the pandemic. For the group, life didn't feel too different: “We always spend 30 days a month together, 10 hours a day,” Jin says. But with their plans upended, they had to pivot. In August, BTS dropped an English-language single, “Dynamite,” that topped the charts in the U.S.—a first for an all-Korean act. With their latest album this year, *Be*, they've become the first band in history to debut a song and album at No. 1 on *Billboard*'s charts in the same week. “We never expected that we would release another album,” says RM. “Life is a trade-off.”

Their triumphs this year weren't just about the music. In October, they put on perhaps the biggest virtual ticketed show of all time, selling nearly a

million tickets to the two-night event. Their management company went public in Korea, turning Bang into a billionaire and each of the members into millionaires, a rarity in an industry where the spoils often go to the distributors, not the creators. And they were finally rewarded with a Grammy nomination. On YouTube, where their Big Hit Labels is one of the top 10 most subscribed music accounts (with over 13 billion views by this year), their only real competition is themselves, says YouTube's music-trends manager Kevin Meenan. The “Dynamite” video racked up 101 million views in under 24 hours, a first for the platform. “They've beaten all their own records,” he says.

Not that the glory comes without drawbacks: namely, lack of free time. It's nearing midnight in Seoul in late November, and BTS, sans Suga, who's recovering from shoulder surgery, are fitting in another interview—this time, just with me. V, Jimin and J-Hope spontaneously burst into song as they discuss Jin's upcoming birthday. “Love, love, love,” they harmonize, making good use of the Beatles' chorus, turning to their bandmate and crossing their fingers in the Korean version of the heart symbol.

Comparisons to that epoch-defining group are inevitable. “What's different is that we're seven, and we also dance,” says V. “It's kind of like a cliché when big boy bands are coming up: ‘Oh, there's another Beatles!’” says RM. I've interviewed BTS five times, and in every interaction, they are polite to a fault. But by now they must be weary of revisiting these comparisons, just as they must be tired of explaining their success. RM says it's a mix of luck, timing and mood. “I'm not 100% sure,” he says.

They've matured into smart celebrities: focused and cautious, they're both more ready for the questions and more hesitant to make big statements. When you ask BTS about their landmark year, for once they're not exactly chipper; J-Hope wryly calls it a “roller coaster.” “Sh-t happens,” says RM. “It was a year that we struggled a lot,” says Jimin. Usually a showman, on this point he seems more introspective than usual. “We might look like we're doing well on the outside with the numbers, but we do go through a hard time ourselves,” he says. For a group whose purpose is truly defined by their fans, the lack of human interaction has been stifling. Still, they've made it a point to represent optimism. “I always wanted to become an artist that can provide comfort, relief and positive energy to people,” says J-Hope. “That intent harmonized with the sincerity of our group and led us to who we are today.”

IN AN ERA marked by so much anguish and cynicism, BTS has stayed true to their message of kindness, connection and self-acceptance. That's the foundation of their relationship with their fans. South Korean philosopher and author Dr. Jiyoung Lee describes

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GOING TO
DO THIS, IF
NOT US?’**

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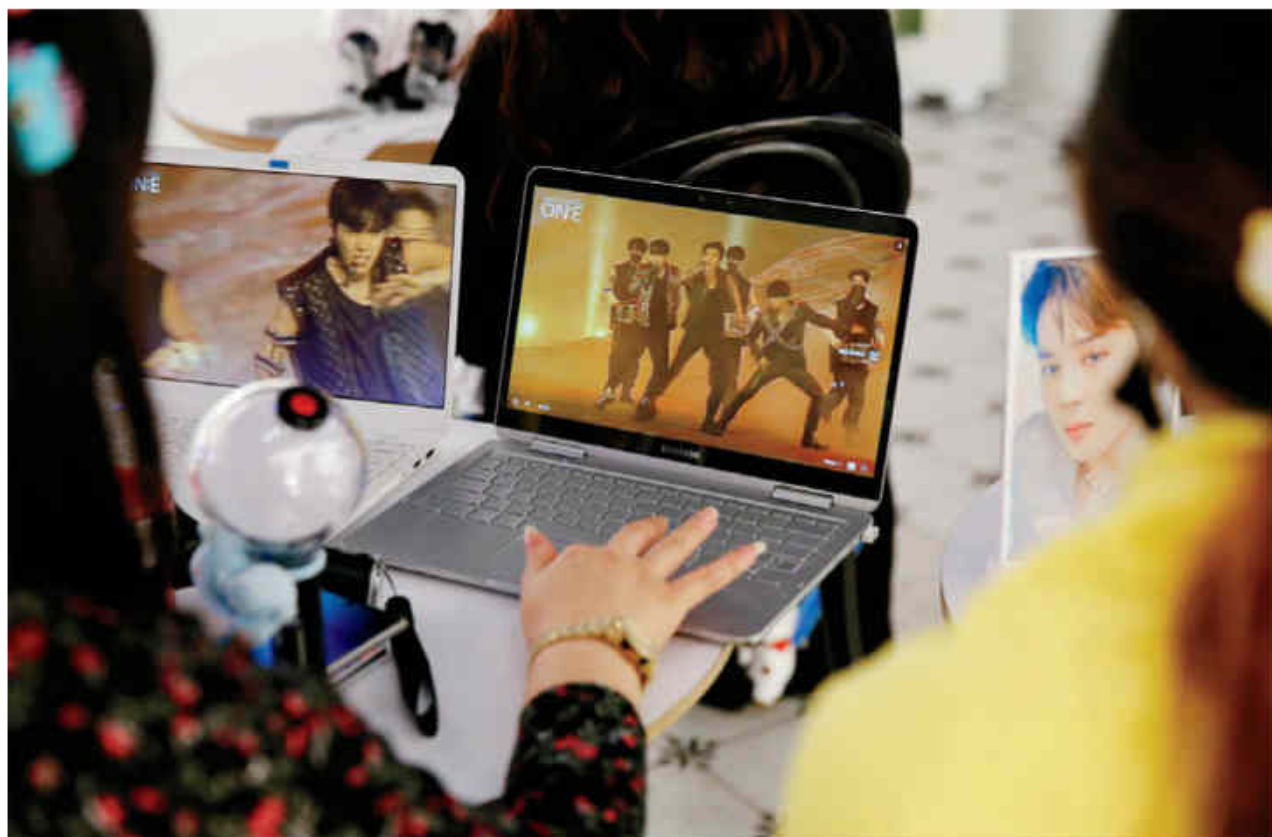
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the passion of BTS's fandom as a phenomenon called "horizontal," a mutual exchange between artists and their fans. As opposed to top-down instruction from an icon to their followers, BTS has built a true community. "Us and our fans are a great influence on each other," says J-Hope. "We learn through the process of making music and receiving feedback." The BTS fandom isn't just about ensuring the band's primacy—it's also about extending the band's message of positivity into the world. "BTS and ARMY are a symbol of change in zeitgeist, not just of generational change," says Lee.

And in June, BTS became a symbol of youth activism worldwide after they donated \$1 million to the Black Lives Matter movement amid major protests in the U.S. (They have a long track record of supporting initiatives like UNICEF and school programs.) BTS says now it was simply in support of human rights. "That was not politics. It was related to racism," Jin says. "We believe everyone deserves to be respected. That's why we made that decision."

That proved meaningful for fans like Yassin Adam, 20, an ARMY from Georgia who runs popular BTS social media accounts sharing news and updates, and who is Black. "It will bring more awareness to this issue people like me face in this country," he says. "I

see myself in them, or at least a version of myself." In May and June, a broad coalition of K-pop fans made headlines for interfering with a police app and buying out tickets for a Trump campaign rally, depleting the in-person attendance. Later that summer, ARMY's grassroots fundraising effort matched BTS's \$1 million donation to Black Lives Matter within 24 hours.

For 28-year-old Nicole Santero, who is Asian American, their success in the U.S. is also a triumph of representation: "I never really saw people like myself on such a mainstream stage," Santero says. She's writing her doctoral dissertation on the culture of BTS fandom, and she runs a popular Twitter account that analyzes and shares BTS data. "Anytime I'm awake, I'm doing something related to BTS," she says. "This is a deeper kind of love."

Devotion like that is a point of pride for BTS, particularly in a year when so much has felt uncertain. "We're not sure if we've actually earned respect," RM says. "But one thing for sure is that [people] feel like, O.K., this is not just some kind of a syndrome, a phenomenon." He searches for the right words. "These little boys from Korea are doing this." —*With reporting by* ARIA CHEN/HONG KONG; MARIAH ESPADA/WASHINGTON; SANGSUK SYLVIA KANG and KAT MOON/NEW YORK

Used to drawing huge crowds, bottom right, BTS this year turned to virtual events like livestreams and an October online concert with nearly a million ticket buyers



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PHOTOS OF THE YEAR, VISIT
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Photos of the year

The images—some stirring, some haunting, all indelible—that defined the year, in the words of the photographers who made them

‘SHE DIDN’T WANT TO LET GO’

On May 24, photographer Al Bello’s sister called to say her in-laws would be visiting in Wantagh, N.Y., and wanted to hug everyone; a drop cloth hung from a clothesline would serve as a barrier. Curious, he stopped by. After Mary Grace Sileo met her grandson at the “hug station,” she began to cry. “Whoa,” Bello remembers thinking, “this escalated quickly.” He captured the embraces over 45 minutes, including that of Sileo and granddaughter Olivia Grant, shown here.

“They were long hugs,” he says.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AL BELLO—GETTY IMAGES





‘IT REALLY FELT LIKE A SHOW OF FORCE’

On March 13, weeks after the U.S. and the Taliban signed a peace agreement, Kabul-based photographer Jim Huylebroek and colleagues took advantage of the lull in fighting to visit insurgents in the eastern Laghman province. On the way, their vehicle was stopped by an elite Taliban Red Unit. “They welcomed us in a friendly way, but things felt a bit tense,” he says. As the journalists prepared to proceed, two children walked up the road and past the fighters. “For me,” says Huylebroek, “it shows the harsh reality in which children grow up.”

PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM HUYLEBROEK—THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX



'A NEW NORMAL'

The pandemic marked the largest disruption of education on record, with more than a billion students shut out of schools by midsummer—"a general catastrophe," U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres warned, "that could waste untold human potential." In July, at Wesley Elementary School in Middletown, Conn., Gillian Laub got a sobering glimpse into what sending kids back to school could look like. "I felt anxious about the long-term effects of this year on children," she says, "and I was in awe of the teachers creating a safe learning space for them again."

PHOTOGRAPH BY GILLIAN LAUB FOR TIME





'THAT DAY SHAPED MY WHOLE YEAR'

George Floyd was killed by police in Minneapolis on a Monday. By Friday, America was different. Malike Sidibe, at 23, was moved to attend and photograph a protest for the first time in his life. In Brooklyn, on May 29, he saw protesters struggling with police over one of their own. Being there, Sidibe says, "changed the way I view the world and how I carry myself in this world."

PHOTOGRAPH BY MALIKE SIDIBE FOR TIME





'A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS'

This spring, staff and patients at Brooklyn's Wyckoff Heights Medical Center allowed Meredith Kohut to document their reality on the front line of the pandemic as COVID-19 killed thousands in New York City. They wanted to warn the rest of the country to avoid their fate. On April 22, she captured Kyle Edwards gathering lanterns from inside one of the refrigerated semitrailers that held the overflow of corpses. "Each body bag represented so much pain and suffering, lives lost and families upended," says Kohut, haunted that the warning went unheeded.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MERIDITH KOHUT FOR TIME





‘HE WAS JUST IN THE ZONE’

On July 28, the flag-draped coffin of Representative John Lewis was placed outside the U.S. Capitol, to accommodate the thousands of mourners who came by to pay their respects. Among them was Jeremiah Harrell, 5, who stood silent at the rope line, recalls photographer Michael A. McCoy. “This is history,” the boy’s father told McCoy. “This is world history. This is Black history.”

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL A. MCCOY—
THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX



CHINA WATCH

PRESENTED BY CHINA DAILY 中國日報

Crops with roots in space produce heavenly results

Technology
plays vital role
in combating
rural poverty

BY ZHANG ZHILAO

Humanity's desire for high-yielding crops is as old as civilization itself.

In China, this is best illustrated by the fact that 41 of the country's 56 ethnic groups have their own myths about the creation of fertile seeds, according to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of Ethnic Literature.

The Dong ethnic group believes that seeds were bestowed by deities showing compassion

to mortals; according to the folklore of the Wa ethnic group, they were spat out by a world-devouring snake slain by the Heaven God.

Now, modern technologies have produced quality seeds from an equally fantastic source: outer space.

These seeds have produced a range of crops, from vines that can sprawl across 150 square meters (1,610 sq. ft.) of land and bear 10,000 tomatoes, to giant black-eyed pea sprouts measuring nearly a meter long, the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp said.

This progress has been achieved through space-induced mutation breeding, also known as space mutagenesis.

In China, hundreds of varieties of space crops have been planted nationwide. They are a key pillar

supporting food security, as well as an innovative approach to improving farmers' yields and combating rural poverty.

The International Atomic Energy Agency defines space-induced mutation breeding as a technique in which seeds are taken into space and exposed to strong cosmic rays — high-energy particles traveling close to the speed of light — as well as other conditions such as vacuums, microgravity and low levels of geomagnetic interference.

This method does not involve transferring genes from one organism to another, as is the case with genetically modified food. Instead, it generates random but potentially useful traits by using a plant's genetic material, mimicking the natural process of spontaneous mutation, albeit at a significantly accelerated

rate, the agency said.

Since the 1920s, seeds have been exposed to radiation or chemicals by scientists to induce greater yield, stability and adaptability to climate change. More than 2,500 varieties of plants bred through mutagenesis have been officially released, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization, a UN agency.

Space is a new setting to conduct this time-tested breeding method, and the IAEA, FAO and the World Health Organization consider space crops safe to consume, as long as they pass rigorous testing and approval processes.

In the 1960s the United States and the Soviet Union carried out space mutation breeding for scientific research and to make living in space more sustainable for astronauts.



Farmers in Tianjiazhai village, Xining, Qinghai province, harvest beetroot cultivated in space in Qinghai Qianziyuan Space Plant Exhibition Park.

Ode to joy and the genius behind it

BY CHEN NAN

What on earth do you give someone for their 250th birthday?

Ludwig van Beethoven's gift to the world was his magnificent music, so what better way to return the compliment when that special day arrives in December than to play the full repertoire of his symphonies and concertos?

Trouble is that there are not

enough hours in a day, let alone days in a week, to achieve that task, so the man who has given himself the mission of completing it, the conductor Li Biao, decided to get in early with a string of concerts.

It began on Sept. 2 and stretched over a number of performances until Sept. 20, during which he conducted the Beijing

Symphony Orchestra at the Forbidden City Concert Hall, as it played such works as *Symphony No. 7 in A major Op. 92*; *Symphony No. 5 in C minor Op. 67*, also known as *The Destiny* and *Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat Op. 73*, also known as *Emperor*.

That in a sense was just the first movement, and the series reached its grand finale at the same venue when the orchestra played a 12-hour performance called the *Beethoven Marathon*.

For the anniversary finale on Dec. 12, repertoires such as *Turkish March Op. 76*, *Bagatelle No. 25 in A minor*, known as *To Elise* and *Piano No. 5 in F major, Op. 24*, also known as *Spring Sonata* were presented.

The events were crowned with the timeless fourth movement of *Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125*, *Ode to Joy*.

"When Li told me about his ideas I was very excited," said Xu Jian, general manager of the

HOW SPACE CROPS ARE PRODUCED



1 Scientists select the healthiest and most genetically stable seeds. If seeds are not of the best quality, it is difficult for researchers to assess the effect outer space has on a sample.



2 Sample seeds are launched into space via balloons, satellites or spacecraft. In 2006, China launched the Shijian-8 retrievable research satellite, the world's first and only satellite for mutagenesis in space.



3 Seeds typically orbit Earth for a week, with some remaining in space for up to 27 days. They are exposed to conditions in space, such as microgravity, extreme cold and a diverse range of cosmic rays, through use of a special container.



4 The seeds return to Earth. China, the United States and Russia are the only countries to date to master recoverable satellite technologies.



5 Scientists plant the space seeds at numerous test sites and grow them for several generations to determine a crop that can reliably produce desirable traits. This process takes at least four years.



6 Space crop candidates are planted at test sites nationwide to assess if they can flourish in different conditions. After several years, a committee evaluates a crop's performance to certify it for mass-planting.

Source: Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences

MUKESH MOHANAN / CHINA DAILY



Big red robe peppercorns and beetroot have been cultivated using mutagenesis.

PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



GENERATING UNEXPECTED NEW TRAITS IS ONE OF THE MAIN FEATURES OF SPACE-INDUCED MUTATION BREEDING."

GUO RUI,

DIRECTOR OF SHAANXI PROVINCIAL ENGINEERING RESEARCH CENTER FOR PLANT SPACE BREEDING

On Aug 5, 1987, China launched its first seed samples into space, opening a new chapter in the country's space-induced mutation breeding. Since then, Chinese scientists have sent more than 30 batches of seeds into space, using a range of satellites and spacecraft, the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp said.

Chengcheng county in Shaanxi province is home to *Piperis dahongpao*, a variety of spice commonly known as big red robe peppercorn that is widely used in Chinese cuisine.

The spice has been used since the Han Dynasty (202 B.C.-220 A.D.) for cooking, medicine, rituals and even for palace decorations, according to the Kunming Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences.

However, it has a notoriously low yield and is difficult to harvest because the plant stems are covered with sharp thorns. For centuries it was considered a "tribute spice" enjoyed only by the privileged, the best-known being Empress Dou of the Han Dynasty, who decorated her chamber with the condiment to

signify fertility and prestige.

It is still not cost-effective to produce this spice.

"A laborer can only pick about 7.5 kilograms (16.5lb.) of this peppercorn a day, and after it is dried in the sun, less than 2kg. is left," said Guo Rui, director of the Shaanxi Provincial Engineering Research Center for Plant Space Breeding.

In 2016 Guo and his team sent some of the spice seeds into orbit for 12 days aboard the Shijian-10 recoverable science satellite.

The team was aiming to create a new variety of peppercorn with stronger resistance to wind and disease, but it discovered something far more exciting: the thorns on the stems had disappeared.

"Generating unexpected new traits is one of the main features of space-induced mutation breeding," Guo said.

Liu Luxiang, deputy director of the Institute of Crop Sciences, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, said in a public lecture in October that while space mutagenesis is a promising technology, the way in which space affects plant seeds is extremely

complex and difficult to control and evaluate.

"Only a tiny fraction of seeds exposed to space will have mutations, and not all of them will produce desirable traits."

As a result, sending seeds into space is merely the start of creating a new variety. The bulk of the research is about growing the returned seeds in different testing fields over several generations to produce a crop that can reliably showcase desirable traits.

Scientists sometimes cross-breed space crops with other varieties to create hybrids that inherit favorable traits from their parents, Liu said.

"Ground tests can be a very arduous process that typically take at least four years to complete."

Guo said his thornless peppercorn is undergoing field tests, and it is hoped that more traits can be changed to enable it to be harvested by machine, greatly increasing the yield and raising farmers' earnings.

"Space crops have played a major role in alleviating poverty, developing local economies and creating unique products," he said.

Forbidden City Concert Hall. "I could imagine the moment when the marathon concert ends with musicians and audiences singing *Ode to Joy* together."

"Chinese classical music lovers are very familiar with Beethoven," said veteran music critic Wang Jiyang. "His nine symphonies cover pretty much every facet of human existence in one way or another."

Conductor Li said: "Beethoven's music works stand

tall at the center of musical history. His music keeps on inspiring and challenging musicians of different generations. Today we celebrate not only the great composer but also the humanity and emotion embedded in his harmonic impulses."

Li spent around 15 years in Europe when he was young. When he was in Germany he visited Bonn, where Beethoven had first displayed his prodigious talent, he said.



Under the baton of conductor Li Biao, a string of concerts called the *Beethoven Marathon* are presented in Beijing. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

CHINA WATCH

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SOLVING A CLASSIC DILEMMA
BY USING A FRESH APPROACH

Film generates
appreciation
for traditional
performing arts

BY WANG KAIHAO

Many older people around the world have at least one common concern: How to get younger people, hooked on their electronic gadgets, interested in classic literature.

Take the Monkey King, or Sun Wukong, as an example. The protagonist in the 16th-century classic novel, *Journey to the West*, is a romantic figure of bravery and adventure that enthralled millions of readers before the appearance of online attractions.

Havoc in Heaven, a new Peking Opera film, attracted the wider public to the glamor of the traditional Chinese performance art, featuring one of the best-known chapters from *Journey to the West*.

This remake is presented by Fujian Film Studio and Fujian Peking Opera Theater.

"It's a big challenge to combine Peking Opera and film, each of which has its own rhythm," said Cheng Lu, director of the film.

"*Havoc in Heaven* includes nearly all the key ingredients of Peking Opera: It covers all the basic techniques, more than 10 classic tunes, and makeup for dozens of facial representations of different figures' characteristics.

"If we use a fresh approach to present the traditional art form, it may create a new channel to promote Peking Opera."

Cheng grew up in a Peking Opera family and used to be a performer at the Fujian Peking Opera Theater. He later switched to work as a director for other genres of films and TV, but his affection for the traditional art



TOP
Performers of the Fujian Peking Opera Theater form the heavenly army that battles the Monkey King in the Peking Opera film *Havoc in Heaven*.

ABOVE
The director Cheng Lu instructs a performer during the production of the film.

PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

form never diminished.

"My parents used to tell me: 'Love for Peking Opera is like an incurable disease. Once you've got it, you'll never get rid of it,'" he said. "I only began to understand what they meant since I came back to direct this film in 2017."

Every child in China grows up hearing the story recounted in *Havoc in Heaven*. It is a coming-of-age tale in which Sun Wukong turns from a carefree character into the great Monkey King. Sun Wukong obtains a golden cudgel, a magical weapon, from the Dragon Palace under the

sea, leading the Dragon King to appeal to the heavenly court. Sun Wukong is then enticed to heaven, where a scheme to ambush him is set and he is put into a furnace. However, after burning for 49 days he changes and evolves, until finally breaking free with a glaring pair of "gold-gaze fiery eyes". The climax of the tale begins with the birth of the Monkey King and ends with his heroic victory over the troops of the heavenly army.

One challenge that Cheng and his production team faced is how to balance the new approach with maintaining the fundamentals of the art.

"The basic principles and performance skills in Peking Opera cannot be changed," he said.

For example, performances in Peking Opera often emphasize symbolism over the accurate portrayal of motion. There are never real horses on stage, and the film reflects that. And when Sun Wukong eats peaches, he merely mimics the action of eating without taking a bite.

Some background images on stage, such as a painted waterfall, remain, and a live band was on the set to provide a soundtrack for the film, rather than overdubbing pre-recorded music.

"If we change traditions to cater to people's taste and pref-

erence for a regular film, it will no longer be a Peking Opera piece of art," Cheng said.

On the other hand, some creativity was needed because Cheng and his team did not just want to document a stage performance.

For instance, four young actors play the role of Sun Wukong in different parts in the film.

According to Cheng, this is to fully display each performer's expertise in martial arts, dialogue, dancing or singing.

To facilitate a more film-like rhythmic flow, Cheng cut some interludes that are typical to stage performances and uses montages to move the story along. Computer-generated imagery is also applied in a restrained way to achieve some visual effects and to portray impossible scenes, such as explosions or the heavenly court floating in the clouds.

Also, close-ups and slow motion scenes in the film leave no room for actors to make the slightest mistake in front of cameras, such as those that would probably go unnoticed in an opera house.

For Zhan Lei, 37, one of the four actors playing Sun Wukong, taking part in *Havoc in Heaven* is the realization of a childhood dream.

"You give me any line from (the 1986 TV series) *Journey to the*

West, I can tell which episode it comes from," Zhan said. "Because I admire Sun Wukong, I want to be impeccable in the performance."

He used to display the most difficult martial arts skills onstage, but he said production of the film has made him realize that the skills need to fit the "role" to best reflect "the exceptional personality of the cultural icon".

The effort has paid dividends. Wang Xiaoshuai, a well-known film director, said: "Thanks to the remarkable martial arts scenes, this film will be a new attraction for future generations, possibly drawing more young enthusiasts to Peking Opera."

Peking Opera is no stranger to the silver screen. *Dingjun Mountain* (1905), the first Chinese film, is a recorded clip of a Peking Opera excerpt. Peking Opera films played a dominant role in the 1960s and 70s, but their popularity was stunted with the arrival of more diverse entertainment.

In recent years, there has been a revival in the popularity of Peking Opera films, as noted by the screenplay writer Gong Yingtian. In 2015 a national alliance of Peking Opera films was established, giving impetus to further development of the genre.

However, the overuse of special effects in real-life scenarios that can be seen in many film adaptations of Peking Opera plays has diluted the original charm of the stage performances.

"We cannot sacrifice the imagination (enabled by the stage) for a film's expression," Gong said.

Sun Wukong turns from a carefree character into the great Monkey King in the coming-of-age tale *Havoc in Heaven*.



A train trip back to a slower age

BY HUANG ZHILING



Trains pulled by steam locomotives in Jiayang, Sichuan province, are among the last ones running in China. LIU LANYING / FOR CHINA DAILY

The world has been dazzled by China's high-speed trains that crisscross the country by the hundreds in all directions every day, but in one corner of this vast land is a gentle reminder that life was not always this fast.

Those fortunate enough to travel to Jiayang, in Sichuan province — perhaps with the help of one of those bullet trains — will find railway carriages hauled by steam locomotives, among the last steam trains operating in China, and still running every day.

First used to transport coal from Jiayang Coal Mine 62 years ago, today they transport local farmers and their produce to market and serve as a tourist attraction.

The mine is about 140 kilometers (87 miles) from Chengdu, the provincial capital, and before the railway was built in 1958 coal was hauled out of the mine by horses and then loaded onto junks that carried it along the Minjiang River.

"In the early days of the railway, farmers headed for the farm produce market sitting beside coal," said Liu Chengxi, the Jiayang official in charge of the trains. "As coal production has stopped, the trains are now exclusively for farmers and tourists."

The narrow gauge railway, only 76.2 centimeters (2.5ft.) instead of the standard 144 cm., stretches for 19.84 km., with the trains reaching a top speed of 20 km./h.

A one-way ticket costs 5 yuan (73 US cents) for seated passengers and 3 yuan

for standing passengers on the ordinary trains, regardless of whether they are traveling empty-handed or with animals and vegetables.

But Li Cuirong, 45, who has worked as a train dispatcher for more than 20 years, recommends tourists pay 80 yuan for a

sightseeing train, as the carriages, which have 37 seats, are more comfortable and air-conditioned. A one-way trip takes about one and a half hours.

As the train winds through the mountain, passengers can view chickens and geese wandering among the orange trees, butterflies dancing over the paddy fields and lotus ponds, and farmhouses in bamboo groves.

The scenery is most dramatic in spring as the train passes a vast expanse of yellow rape seed blossoms as seen in a picture album about the trains published by the Sichuan Fine Arts Publishing House.

The photos of the trains in the four seasons were taken by Yuan Chengfang, 58, who was a miner in Jiayang Coal Mine from 2004 to 2016.

The trains attract many people eager to experience the halcyon days of steam travel, Yuan said.

Rob Dickinson, a steam train lover from the United Kingdom, has ridden the trains twice. Writing for the International Steam Page listed on a few internet portals, he said he hopes the narrow-gauge line can last long enough for him to find the time to get back again.

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FOR FARMERS
AND TOURISTS.”

LIU CHENGXI,
JIAYANG OFFICIAL IN CHARGE
OF THE TRAINS

Past and Prologue

Beginning with Franklin D. Roosevelt for 1932, TIME has named 14 Presidents as Person of the Year. The covers below are the first for each. The long-standing connection is a recognition of the influential role these leaders play in the world—and the promise that comes with a new vision for it.



Franklin D. Roosevelt (1932), Harry S. Truman (1945), Dwight D. Eisenhower (1959), John F. Kennedy (1961), Lyndon B. Johnson (1964), Richard Nixon (1971), Jimmy Carter (1976), Ronald Reagan (1980), George H.W. Bush (1990), Bill Clinton (1992), George W. Bush (2000), Barack Obama (2008), Donald Trump (2016), Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris (2020)

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